Encounter

September 1971 35p

The Long Debate over Poverty

Brian Inglis

THE SURVIVOR

A Brilliant Theory of the 'Extreme Situation' in our Times by a New Young Writer

Terrence Des Pres

The Path Ahead to Europe

Andrew Shonfield

Leo Labedz

POST-IMPERIAL JOURNEY

Max Beloff

Black Student Militants

Martin Kilson

Risorgimento

Luigi Barzini

MY KARSH PICTURE

Norman Levine

LETTER FROM BERLIN

Melvin J. Lasky

Disestablishing Science? 4 replies to Dr Bronowski

Sir Peter Medawar

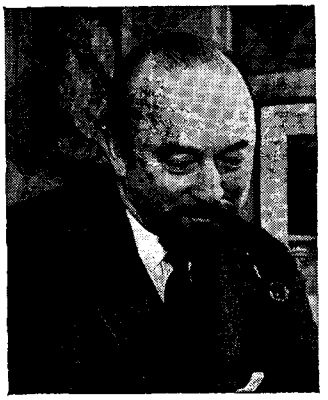
Eugene Rabinowitch Gerard Piel

Anthony Wedgwood Benn

MARGUERITE DURAS' NO-PLAY

John Weightman

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Now back in print

Melvin J. Lasky

THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

Introduction by **Hugh Seton-Watson**

Epilogue by **François Bondy** **$15.00**

"This is the best book on the Hungarian Revolution," Harry Schwarz, *New York Times*

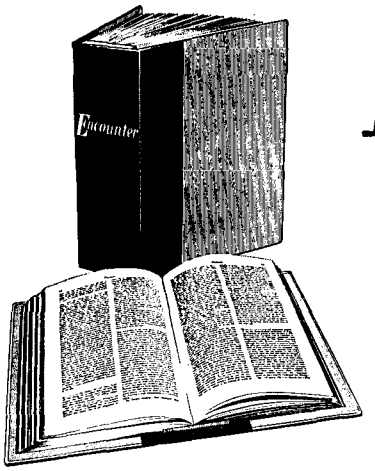
"A brilliant use of newspaper despatches and eye-witness accounts, both Communist and non-Communist," *Daily Telegraph*

"Dans sa sécheresse, dans sa concision même, ce livre mérite de demeurer l'un des classiques de notre temps," André Fontaine, *Le Monde*

"None of the historical narratives [on the uprising of 1956] seems to me to have either the scientific or, I dare say, the artistic value of this collection," Raymond Aron

"None of the existing accounts approaches this in impact and comprehensiveness . . . It has the logic of a lawyer's brief and the sweep of a Greek tragedy," Ernest Pisko, *Christian Science Monitor*

BOOKS FOR LIBRARIES INC **50 Liberty Avenue, Freeport, New York**



Encounter BINDER

The ENCOUNTER Easibinder enables readers, for half the cost of full binding, to preserve their copies in an attractive and durable format. Each copy of the magazine, as received, can be quickly inserted in the case and secured there. Copies can just as easily be removed.

The binder holds six copies. It is strongly made with stiff covers, bound in maroon and grey cloth, with the title of the magazine blocked in gold on the spine. Full assembly instructions are included with each binder.

The ENCOUNTER Easibinder costs 75p or $2.50, including the cost of packing and posting by surface mail to any address in the world. There is no trade discount.

ORDER BY COUPON OR SIMILAR LETTER

To **ENCOUNTER (Binder), 59 ST MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON WC2**

Please send.....ENCOUNTER Easibinder(s). I enclose cheque/P.O. for.....(75p or $2.50 per binder)

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Encounter

SEPTEMBER 1971

VOL. XXXVII NO. 3

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* D. J. ENRIGHT

ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Margot Walmsley.* EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: *Bryan Healing.*
GENERAL MANAGER: *Anthony Robinson.* ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: *John Hall.*
ADVISORY BOARD: *Maurice Cranston, Anthony Hartley, John Mander, Goronwy Rees, Edward Shils, John Weightman.*

Published monthly by Encounter Ltd. at 59 St. Martin's Lane London W.C.2.
Per copy: UK 35p: USA & Canada $1.25: Back numbers 35p ($1.25).
Annual subscription: UK £4: USA & Canada $14 (by air $15.50): Elsewhere £4.95.
Full-time students (state place and course of study): UK £3.15: USA and Canada $10: Elsewhere £3.15.
Trade/Subscription Department: Encounter Ltd. 59 St. Martin's Lane London W.C.2 (01-836 4194).
US & Canadian Subscriptions: British Publications Inc. 30 East 60th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022.
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. P.O. Box 6014, Long Island City, N.Y. 11106.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. © *1971 by Encounter Ltd.*

THE SURVIVOR	3	*Terrence Des Pres*
THE PATH AHEAD TO EUROPE	20	*Leo Labedz*
		Andrew Shonfield
RISORGIMENTO	29	*Luigi Barzini*
MY KARSH PICTURE (*story*)	39	*Norman Levine*
COLUMN	41	*R*
MEN & IDEAS		
THE POOR WHO WERE WITH US	44	*Brian Inglis*
POETRY		
WOMAN OF SAGANU	19	*Anzai Hitoshi*
SABBATH EVE IN LOS ANGELES	38	*Richard E. Sherwin*
POEM	55	*N. S. Willy*
FOUR POEMS	56	*Marin Sorescu*
JUST SO	95	*Jeremy Robson*
THEATRE		
A FRENCH NO-PLAY	58	*John Weightman*
NOTES & TOPICS		
NOTES ON A POST-IMPERIAL JOURNEY	61	*Max Beloff*
IN THE MARGIN: LETTER FROM BERLIN	64	*M.J.L.*
BOOKS & WRITERS		
ARISTOPHANES & THE FICTIONAL	68	*John Holloway*
FROM CALIGARI TO KITSCH	73	*Richard Mayne*
A TALENT FOR PLEASING	76	*Ronald Hayman*
SELECTED BOOKS	77	*D. J. Enright, Martin Bell, Michael Schmidt, Michael Thorpe, E. B. Greenwood, Elizabeth Maslen*
POINTS OF THE COMPASS		
THE BLACK STUDENT MILITANT (I)	83	*Martin Kilson*
AUTHORS & CRITICS		
DISESTABLISHING SCIENCE?	91	*P. B. Medawar*
		Gerard Piel
		Anthony Wedgwood Benn
		Eugene Rabinowitch
LETTERS	96	
AUTHORS	97	

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The End of An Alliance

Rome's Defection from the Axis in 1943

FRIEDRICH-KARL VON PLEHWE

With a Foreword by F. W. D. Deakin
Translated by Eric Mosbacher

Here is the personal account of a senior German Officer, Chief of Staff to the German Military Attaché in Rome, of events in Italy between the Axis collapse in North Africa in April 1943 and the Italian surrender five months later. £2·25

The Dictionary of National Biography 1951-1960

With an Index covering the years 1901-1960 in one alphabetical series

Edited by
E. T. WILLIAMS and
HELEN M. PALMER

'I must congratulate the editors on a major achievement. . . . It is by any standards a most valuable volume and a major event in British publishing.' — PAUL JOHNSON in the *New Statesman* £9·50

The Oxford History of South Africa: II South Africa 1870-1966

Edited by
MONICA WILSON and
LEONARD THOMPSON

Volume II of a two-volume history of South Africa describes the economic growth that has taken place in South Africa during the century that began with the discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West; examines the history of the three great social complexes of modern South Africa; deals with the impact and interaction of the major political forces that have operated in and on South African society during the century, and presents an account of the changing relationships between South Africa and the outside world. 6 maps 13 figures £5

The House of Commons in the Eighteenth Century

P. D. G. THOMAS

This book is concerned with the procedure and practice of the House of Commons in the context of the contemporary political background. The aim is to show how the House conducted its business at a time when debates and votes were of real significance. £3·50

The European Discovery of America

The Northern Voyages A.D. 500-1600

SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON

Admiral Morison's magisterial account of the early European exploration of the North Atlantic and the coasts of North America is a mine of information on early sailing techniques and conditions. Most of the volume is devoted to the great explorers: the Cabots, Verrazzano, Cartier, Gilbert, Frobisher, and Raleigh. The many illustrations are largely contemporary. Frontispiece 21 half-tone illustrations numerous maps diagrams £6

South Africa

Sociological Perspectives

Edited by
HERIBERT ADAM

The fifteen essays in this principally analytical study deal with different aspects of the basic racial situation in South Africa; segregated groups and attitudes towards them; the power élite and its ideology; African nationalism; religion; education; urbanization and its effects; legal provisions; the labour market; and economic development. An extensive bibliography of books and articles on South Africa published since 1960 is included. £3·50

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Terrence Des Pres

The Survivor

On the Ethos of Survival in Extremity

DREAD AND SAVAGERY are the signs of our time, and quietly over coffee, matter-of-factly in the presence of our children we discuss the likelihood of events once too terrible to be taken seriously. That some great end is upon us we cannot know. The age vacillates between extremes of hope and despair, and yet the steady tendency of imagination, at least in its literary manifestations, is to brood on the darker possibilities. The sense of gathering darkness prominent in modern classics like *To the Lighthouse, The Sound and the Fury, The Magic Mountain,* and *Remembrance of Things Past* narrows in recent fiction to the specific awareness, closely tied to political developments, of the disappearance of familiar conditions of life, and the coming of a condition so extreme as to threaten if not the continuity of the race then surely our claim to value as human beings. In Saul Bellow's novel, *Mr Sammler's Planet* (1970), the survivor-hero says, "I am not sure that this is the worst of all times. But it is in the air now that things are falling apart, and I am affected by it."

So are we all; and with A-bombed cities, death camps, erosion of faith in civilisation and the breakdown of social structures, the question of survival, of human continuity, begins to force itself up on us. In *Deliverance* (1970) James Dickey believes "the machines are going to fail, the political systems are going to fail"; and anticipating the action, his protagonist says, "I wouldn't mind if it came down, right quick, to the bare survival of who was ready to survive." We can dismiss frontier bravado, but the issue that prompts it, the matter of survival, is something we can no longer ignore. When an even-tempered humanist like Kenneth Clark concludes his *Civilisation* (1969) on a note of doom, we begin to suspect that much, or perhaps everything, may soon be at stake. As Lord Clark puts it, "one must concede that the future of civilisation does not look very bright. . . . One may be optimistic, but one can't exactly be joyful at the prospect before us."

At its worst the prospect includes nuclear wipe-out, ecological collapse, the either/or of totalitarianism and chaos—catastrophe, that is, different in extent and consequence from the kind of local event which might destroy a community or a nation, but which leaves the rest of us untouched. Our present concern is with anti-life and anti-human conditions of universal reach; disaster of such magnitude that, once imminent, only the concerted effort of great governments could divert or cope with it. But history proves, if nothing else, that power is devoid of imagination, a dehumanising apparatus in its own right, and that its exercise only increases the kind of possibility we fear. Indeed, to think of those who rule our larger fate, men at home in the Pentagon and the Kremlin, is to invite despair; and out of what can only be life's own stubbornness, the figure of the survivor begins to emerge as a practical image of the self, as the prospective carrier of life and hope should catastrophe explode our human world, a type of moral identity commensurate with the dark ages now forecast.

ALL MEN ARE VICTIMS—of time, the flesh, the fathers' sins; or caught up in those random days when atrocity becomes the norm. But humankind, as Eliot put it, cannot bear much reality, and men have evolved elaborate uses of myth and ritual to conceal the fact that vulnerability is a condition of existence. One of the functions of civilisation has been to

TERRENCE DES PRES *lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He is a Junior Fellow in the Society of Fellows at Harvard University.*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provide symbolic systems which displace awareness of what is terrible, in this case the shifting of victimhood to appointed groups and individuals, the scapegoats and sacrificial heroes who by their suffering sanctify our illusions and grant to the community a liberating grace. Ritual sacrifice has regularly attended the rise of civilisation, and often, as in the case of Greek tragedy, order and sacrifice seem inseparable. But symbolic manipulations of consciousness no longer serve, and we begin to see what Aristotle saw in the *Poetics*: that grace is temporary, that the imagination of disaster is ever with us.

If we take the evolution of Western literature as an indication, it appears that the scope of human self-awareness has moved from its beginnings in identification with godlike heroes, through a steady diminishment of heroic stature until, today, the "hero" in fiction is almost exclusively a victim. In *The Gates of Horn* (1963) Harry Levin equates this process of loss with the development of "realism" in literature: "Thus the history of culture becomes a succession of unmasked ideologies and lost illusions, obsolete fables and corrected hypotheses, of which literature comprises the record and commentary. "Layer after layer of the human vestment has frayed, become a patchwork of rags, been cast off, until the human image emerges in entire nakedness, at the mercy of every ill and yet determined to survive.

This, at least, is one way to read recent developments in fiction, not only the appearance of the survivor, but also the prominence of picaresque and comic heroes, types which have traditionally embodied the values of survival. Man fell from grace to bitter need, or so our literature imports; but it also suggests that, blessed with a blunt unwillingness to die or accept defeat, he begins to move beyond the victim as a final image of the self.

WE CANNOT DRAW ENERGY from Promethean types of the hero, this much is obvious. When whole nations are pawns in a game the superpowers play, then the deeds of individuals—if heroism is measured by effective action—are quixotic, and in their impotence pathetic. On the other hand, the example of the tragic hero, although it is tempting, serves our need no better. Our most serious models, those who for centuries have commanded love and imitation, draw their sanction and compelling strength from death. Christ, Socrates, the tragic hero from Antigone to Samson to Becket, all are sacrificial victims, all die to resolve conflict, to re-affirm a larger order, to ensure that the spirit they speak for will not perish. The elemental grandeur of tragic death is manifest; its pattern is honoured and familiar to the point where the connection between heroism and death seems natural and inevitable.

But times change, and within a landscape of total disaster, places like Auschwitz, Hiroshima, the hamlets of Viet Nam where men die by thousands, where machines reduce courage to stupidity and dying to a kind of complicity with aggression, it makes little sense to speak of the dignity of death or of its communal blessing. We require a heroism commensurate with the vastness of desolation in our time, and we begin to ask whether, in the struggle to preserve and extend the human realm, circumstances may not arise in which it is better—more useful and courageous, less self-indulgent—to stay alive than to die. If it is right that men should die to preserve ideals without which the human enterprise could not sustain itself, it is also true, as men in power like to think, that to kill an idea we need simply kill those who hold it. And with the application of this policy, with the ideology and technology of genocide ready to hand, the man who survives may be more valuable than the thousands who die. Here the excruciating wisdom of the Diaspora becomes apparent: when men must live against overwhelming odds and death is a condition of life, when mere existence is miraculous, to die is in no way a triumph.

The Heroism of Survival

EACH THING," said Spinoza in the *Ethics*, "insofar as it is in itself, endeavours to persevere in its being." We may question this axiom with regard to stars and stones, but as it refers to animals and plants, to societies and men, it is undeniable. Survival, of the body and its well-being, of the spirit and its well-being (as when Nietzsche speaks of "spiritual self-preservation"), takes priority over everything else, although this imperative

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is transcended and lost sight of—the mark of man's rise to freedom—when the machinery of civilisation is working as it should.

In time of crisis, however, the issue of survival moves from background to the centre. Each thought and gesture, for those in the concentration camps, each nuance of feeling and expression is directly a matter of life and death. When extremity prevails, all men become self-consciously survivors, engaged in a struggle whose single aim is to carry on, to come through. But here a distinction arises, for a man may live in more than one way, at his own or at others' expense. In extremity, that is, survival involves moral choice. In Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle,* a veteran of the camps has this to say: "The wolfhound is right and the cannibal is wrong." Nature red in tooth and claw is not the human way. This is the crucial difference, and to describe the way in which a man survives without betraying his innocence is to define the human, as opposed to the Darwinian, survivor.

THE DEFINITE CHARACTERISTIC of the survivor is that he survives not in body only, but also in spirit, enduring anti-human conditions without the loss of his will to carry on in human ways. Alexander Solzhenitsyn is a great example, a man of tried humanity who survived the Russian front, eight years in Stalin's camps, cancer, and most recently the suppression of his identity as a Russian writer. But to make of this brave man an object of examination would be to mythicise him, to remove him from the unique density of fact and contingency which is the life of the individual in history as opposed to the timeless image of the hero. Myth cannot be escaped, in which case it seems better to deal directly with fiction.

Approaching literature in this way, we need consider nothing more abstruse than its formal purity and the ideality of its content. We are after an image, the lucidity of which may lend some clarity to our lives; an image complete in itself and freely apparent to the imagination. Of course the relation between image and actuality is not simple. The tragic hero and the martyr are ideal types rooted in myth and concrete human potential; but also, types easily lost when we analyse the ways men actually die. All the same, they significantly influence the self-consciousness of men in crisis, and it is partly thanks to such images that we have recourse to what in extremity we cannot do entirely without—some locus of name and habitat to situate what we are and how we act within an encompassing frame of human order and value. And when extremity becomes prolonged, when death becomes a condition of life, the survivor may be more useful than other types. History moves, times change, men find themselves subject to unexpected circumstance. Situations arise that cannot be withstood or transcended by resort to the wisdom of other days, and except for special cases, the martyr and the sacrificial victim are types of the hero outgrown by time.

OF THE EXAMPLES in this essay, the first two (in novels by Camus and Malamud) represent survival as an action which had a socio-political outcome. Here the survivor is a hero in the classic sense. But there is another possibility, most fully described in the novels of Solzhenitsyn. This survivor does not change his environment by staying alive. Externally he is powerless but internally he is intensely active, and in this case the heroism is in the struggle itself, in the fact that here, amid universal degradation, a human being exists.

In Ilona Karmel's remarkable novel, *An Estate of Memory,*[1] four women struggle against despair and death in a Polish concentration camp. Trapped by inhuman conditions, they keep up a minimum of business as usual, the human business of affective intercourse. They band together in mutual defence, in mutual support, and slowly they grow into a kind of family, with all the travail that intimacy entails—jealousy and guilt, petty quarrels and moments of selfishness, but also sacrifice, understanding, mutual giving, caring and receiving. Surrounded by death and terror they weave this ragged fabric of love to wrap about their nakedness, and are sustained by it through the days of an amazing event—a child is born and smuggled out of the camp. In the end three of the women die, but their deaths are not what matters. What counts is that ordinary people, helpless and made to suffer

[1] Ilona Karmel, *An Estate of Memory* (Houghton Mifflin, 1969).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

without relief, carry on in human ways. The value here is in the act itself, and becomes visible as soon as the struggle to survive is recognised as also a struggle to preserve the living seeds of existence as a human being. The survivor is a hero in that by staying alive he becomes an effective agent in the fight against extremity. But just as much, the survivor is a hero because as soon as he chooses not only to live, but to live humanly, he takes upon himself the burden of an extraordinary enterprise, an action requiring enormous will, courage, capacity to bear pain, and an unshakable faith in the value of life and human decency—requiring, in fact, an assertion of the self that by any standard ought to be considered heroic.

THE TRAGIC HERO chooses to find his consummation in death and controls, therefore, the condition of his apotheosis. The survivor's choice is not absolute in the same way. To stay alive is the condition of his fulfilment, but unlike the martyr and the tragic hero—and given the same degree of courage—the survivor cannot ensure his success. Solzhenitsyn's *zeks* (inmates) struggle to remain alive in Siberian camps where any day a combination of starvation, sickness, and the whim of a vicious guard can finish a man no matter how firmly he desires to live. This limitation is one more condition against which the survivor must set himself. But should he die, it is his struggle to live, and not the manner of his dying, that earns our respect. That he is a survivor at all has a mysterious grace about it. And there is always this distinction: in extremity, the bare possibility of survival is not enough. What is required is the move beyond despair and self-pity to that fierce determination which the survivor above others knows. To come through. To keep a living soul in a living body.

In his study of the survivors of Hiroshima[2] Robert Lifton suggests that "the holocausts of the twentieth century have thrust the survivor ethos into special prominence, and imposed upon us all a series of immersions into death which mark our existence." To be a victim is to suffer death in life, and it is this condition that the survivor would transcend. He defines himself against a dehumanising world of violence, and against the hegemony of the "fittest"—for "survival of the fittest" describes those who plunder and despoil our natural environment, those who man the bombers in Viet Nam and the tanks in Prague, those who maintain by force and falsehood a world in which the individual is helpless and ashamed, a world in which any one of us or any million can, almost without notice, be disposed of.

The Extreme Situation

THE FIRST CONDITION of extremity is that there is no escape, no place to go except the mass grave. It is like a city under siege, Paris in 1870, Leningrad of the 900 days, Oran in *The Plague* (1947): "But once the town gates were shut, everyone of us realised that all . . . were . . . in the same boat, and each would have to adapt himself to the new conditions of life." So begins the reign of death in Camus's allegory of the extreme situation. New conditions become "normal conditions—in other words, the plague"; and this, in its immense power, is like "the slow, deliberate progress of some monstrous thing crushing out all upon its path." The city becomes a "victim world," and the old order is transformed: schools turn into hospitals, the stadium into a quarantine camp, street-cars into death-wagons. It is a world in which living and dying are no longer held apart, in which the forms of life are determined by death.

Death waits at home, in the street, and on the stage, and slowly the condition of anti-life, because it is ubiquitous and cannot be held in the balance of combat, because it cannot be ignored or veiled in myth, becomes anti-human as well. The dehumanising forces of fear and helpless waiting bear down; subject to this pressure and unable to draw inspiration from traditional forms of courage-in-adversity, the "townspeople" in Camus's novel exhibit the full range of all-too-human and less than human behaviour. They become selfish, vicious, despairing; they will not face facts but exploit one another in order to bolster the illusion of security. Their human capacities are reduced to the vanishing point, personalities dissolve, and in the end most of them collapse into the mass of identical "sleep-

[2] Robert Lifton, *Death in Life* (Weidenfeld Nicolson, 1968).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

walkers." Faced with a terror that has no foretellable end, they are reduced to a brotherhood of victims, each isolated in distrust from his neighbour, each drawn into the tight core of minimal self and consciousness.

Had the city been attacked by something on the human scale, say an invasion by hostile neighbours, the citizens would have rallied to their cause, giving their lives as the martyr and the patriot have always done. But the extreme situation is not an event, not a period of crisis with its proper beginning, middle, and end. It is a condition of existence which persists beyond the ability of men to immediately alter or end it. And because it is not made to human scale, time-honoured forms of heroism fail as effective models for action and spiritual sustenance. When men are agents as well as victims, when they can offset their victimisation with meaningful (if not successful) action, then the condition of anti-life does not become severely dehumanising. What wrecks the spirit's will to carry on is the sense of helplessness, the lack of opportunity for traditional heroism, and the recognition that one is nothing but a victim.

THIS KIND OF EXTREMITY requires an attitude which will allow men to act, to keep faith in themselves and thereby to move beyond their fate as victims. First of all, then, the survivor is not a victim merely. He is the victim who refuses to accept his victimisation as total, who fights it as best he can, and who will not, either by act or attitude, consent to the death of himself or anyone else. He will not, that is, accept the logic of the situation imposed upon him. Dehumanisation and death are the results of extremity, and they may appear to cynicism and common sense alike as reasonable, or even inevitable, consequences. Prolonged and encompassing, the forces of negation may seem to *be* reality. But the survivor holds life and spirit within himself and knows, by the plain fact that he exists, a greater reality. He clings to his faith in the value and dignity of living things, and will not bow to destruction. So long as there is a way, his will is active in rebellion against the anti-world. He will overthrow it if he can, but in any case, by the fact that he exists, he rejects its law.

Accordingly, there are two kinds of people in *The Plague*, the "towns-people" and the "volunteers." Both react to the conditions of the plague, the former on its terms, the latter on terms partially their own. The "towns-people" remain subject to necessity, at one with the situation which destroys them. The "volunteers" stand in contradiction to the situation; they resist the conditions imposed upon them, turn reaction into action self-directed, and thereby move far enough beyond death's bondage to keep themselves intact as human beings. Rieux, Tarrou, Grand, and their co-workers decide to pit their compassion and intelligence against the tyranny of the plague. Together they organise hygienic programmes; they tend the dying; they dispose of the dead. They work twenty hours a day amid the stench and agony of the dying, spending themselves in that endless and empty time of day upon day, without the encouragement of visible progress, without the hope of a positive end in sight, and always with the knowledge that after all death may cut the struggle short. They carry on nonetheless, because "they knew it was the only thing to do."

It is plainly the human thing to do. Under normal circumstances to protect the living, to aid the sick and to bury the dead are taken for granted as elementary forms of human activity. In time of extremity however, continuing to do one's job as part of the human community becomes difficult to the point of heroism. Yet Camus insists that his protagonists are not heroic in a traditional sense. As Rieux puts it, "There's no question of heroism in all this. It's a matter of common decency. . . . Heroism and sanctity don't really appeal to me. . . . What interests me is being a man." Camus's point is that to be a man under dehumanising pressure requires extraordinary effort; and that in extremity the struggle to survive and the struggle to remain human become one, in some way dependent on each other. "The only means of fighting a plague is—common decency." And as Rieux concludes, "there was nothing admirable about this attitude; it was merely logical." Logical, yes, but very difficult. There are times when to maintain a simple decency in relation to oneself and to other men becomes an accomplishment of heroic proportion. And Rieux's characteristic understatement serves to point up the rejection of drama, the realism and hard-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minded humility essential to a heroism of this kind.

THE TRAGIC HERO finds in death a victory. Thereby he places himself beyond compromise, he becomes part of the cosmic order, and the truth for which he stood is solemnised, pressed deep in the hearts of his audience through the drama of his death. In this way he becomes the apotheosis of heroic man and proof of the spirit's hegemony over the flesh. In short, by dying the traditional hero achieves immortality and death itself becomes the confirmation of greatness.

But none of this means much to men in the grip of plague. For the survivor all things—himself, his works, the race of men—are painfully mortal. Against this fact he takes his stand, part of the struggle that life and intelligence wage perpetually against destruction and darkness. To live in extremity is to face overwhelming odds, a predicament the tragic hero avoids by dying; in Hemingway's phrase, he is "destroyed but not defeated." The survivor's task is harder, since for him destruction and defeat, like soul and body, cannot be separated.

Holding On

RILKE CRYSTALLISED our response to art in his sonnet on the archaic torso of Apollo—*Du musst dein Leben ändern.* But now, to a degree which cannot be ignored, it is less the works created than the suffering sustained that in Rilke's sense provokes us to deep reception. Mass murder and the concentration camps have introduced new standards of judgment into our thinking about the human condition, and the concrete authority of men in pain intrudes upon the play of imagination. This is evident in much of post-war fiction. Confronting extremity and often to the injury of art, imagination reveals a tendency to stick to the unresolved terror of fact—conditions which tear us from art to life, as when one wakes from vision and nightmare to the darker light of day. Like a bitter wind, the prospect of atrocity cuts through our fictions as through our lives.

The Fixer[3] is a case in point, a novel which sticks, obstinately and without aesthetic relief, to the confines of the event it recounts. "We're dealing nowadays," says Malamud's hero, "with the slaughter of large numbers and it's getting worse." This is the world of the pogroms, in particular the world of the notorious Beiliss trial in Kiev in 1913. Accused of the ritual murder of a child, Mendel Beiliss was held for two years in prison where every pressure against life and mind, short of outright murder, was inflicted upon him. With only a rabid anti-Semitism to support its case, and therefore afraid to try Beiliss publicly, the government decided to break his spirit and obtain a confession, while at the same time arranging prison conditions so as to increase the probability of sickness and accident—in the hope that death would, once more, resolve an otherwise unresolvable situation. These were the conditions Beiliss had to endure, and it is the victory of his survival that Malamud celebrates. Here the hero's task is not to break, not to confess or go insane, and not, by dying, to confirm his role as appointed victim; in short, by surviving to make sure that the anti-human situation remains unresolved until it collapses.

The fixer leaves the pale, goes to Kiev, and soon finds himself in the hands of his enemies, "unjustly accused, helpless, unable to offer proof or be believed." His fate is like the larger fate of the Jews:

> Overnight a madman is born who thinks Jewish blood is water. Overnight life becomes worthless. The innocent are born without innocence. The human body is worth less than its substance. A person is shit. Those Jews who escape with their lives live in memory's pain. So what can Yakov Bok do about it?

If he dies, nothing, and that he will die is probable: "It was a natural thing for prisoners to die in prison. They died like flies all over Russia." The fixer is held in isolation and has no sense of the political situation, but he knows that if the government should "prove" that a Jew murdered a Russian child, the Black Hundreds would be vindicated and once more a bloody tide would sweep the ghettos. Against this he will do what he can. To die in prison would be to accept his role as victim and confirm his appointed guilt. Therefore he

[3] Bernard Malamud, *The Fixer* (London, Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1967; New York, Farrar, Straus & Giroux Inc.).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

must stay alive, and by refusing to disappear in death, force the government to bring him to trial. His mission, he comes finally to see, is simply to survive.

> Therefore he must endure to the trial and let them confirm his innocence by their lies. He has no future but to hold on, wait it out.

To hold on. To wait. Imperatives which define the survivor's struggle, but against what? Against conditions opposed to the fragile realm of civilised life, conditions which make life nasty, brutish and short; conditions, that is, which civilisation works to transcend and keep us, the lucky ones, from falling back into —random death and spiritual vacuum, physical anguish and empty time.

The fixer lives in an unrelieved state of physical discomfort: the winter cold and summer slime, the unmet needs for food, air, motion and light, as well as the intenser moments of sickness, beatings and extreme exhaustion. This is the condition of corporeal anguish, a closed circuit of physical-spiritual erosion which the tragic hero, his moment of agony surpassed in the glory of death, knows little of. This is the undramatic, unglorified sorrow of the stupid body, a dehumanising condition that the victim has always known, but which most of us have ignored in favour of "inner" suffering—as if mind and body were separate worlds. The separation of spirit from the flesh is one of those illusions which seem necessary to the balance of civilisation, but like other illusions, this one does not survive the test of extremity. Pain that goes on and on seeps through body and mind, reducing the range of consciousness to bodily concerns. Existence becomes the vulnerable flesh, and the mind is forced to acknowledge its crude dependency.

In this as in other respects, survival inverts the values of civilisation: the body can no longer be ignored as unworthy of spiritual significance. Indeed, everything depends upon the mysterious strength of bone and blood, and in extremity the body's will and the will of the spirit must join in common cause.

THE SURVIVOR FIGHTS THE BATTLE that the edifice of civilisation was built to fight. Structured time is one of civilisation's great gifts, the blessing of a foundation for measure and purposive action. Extremity however, is the antithesis, the stark negation, of all things human, and in extreme situations the forms of time dissolve, the rhythm of change and on-going life is lost. Days pass, seasons, years pass and the fixer has no idea how long his ordeal will continue: "Time blew like a steppe wind into an empty future. There was no end, no event, indictment, trial."

His situation is not a crisis in the normal sense, not, that is, a determinate span in the figure of significant time. It is an emptiness complete in itself, a suspension in the sameness of identical days, a suffocating boredom that could last a year or a lifetime. Russian prisons have been notorious for lives spent this way, and the fixer might remain in his cell, a young man becoming an old man, without so much as a sentence to measure the waste of his life. The death of time destroys the sustaining sense of growth, of purpose and of life in motion; it threatens to destroy faith in the possibility that anything can come from merely staying alive, and this too the survivor must face and withstand.

HOLDING ON, the fixer is repeatedly forced to recognise that "whenever he had been through the worst, there was always worse." The spirit's element is space, and among other things civilisation is the creation of a steady space in which our humanity may freely hatch and thrive. It is a space of sustaining plenitude, a network of meaning and interchange, the matrix of human communion. Certainly it is not an empty space, for nothing, we are sure, can live in a vacuum. But the fixer does; chained to his cell and shivering with pain, the emptiness of time is compounded by the emptiness of total isolation. The one man with whom he communicates is murdered. The only other men he sees are his jailors and prosecutors. He has no contact with the world outside, and therefore no knowledge of his predicament as part of a larger whole. His life, his suffering, seem severed from meaning and human connection, and he is forced to endure with the thought that "he suffers for no one except himself."

The fixer is a non-believer and will not accept the victim's consolation of a justice at the end of time. But he cannot deny the suffering of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his people. At first he insists that he is "not a political person," but his own suffering brings home to him the pain of all men in extremity; the memory of the pogroms lifts him from his isolation, and he comes finally to realise that when the exercise of power includes the death of innocent people, "there's no such thing as an unpolitical man."

The "political person," in the pure sense Malamud intends, is the man conscious of the individual's implicit relation to the community of men, and therefore the man who takes intelligent action to make explicit and effective this vital connection of one to all. For the fixer, intelligent action is to survive, and by his irreducible presence, by refusing to go away or be simply a victim, to force the hand of the powers that be. He will cross the anti-human void; he will invest his survival with human value, and thereby transform the vacuum into a corridor of significant space.

Resistance & Spiritual Growth

SINCE WORLD WAR II THE IDEA of "survival value" has gained a currency in our judgments about institutions, about persons and human works in general that even a few years earlier would have caused alarm and denial. To consider survival in this way signals a change in consciousness, a shift to limits and foundations, to care and a new humility, which is rooted in the weakening and sporadic failure of civilisation as an efficient mechanism. It is rooted also in the climate of atrocity and the rhythm of destruction which have characterised our century; and in the unveiling of death for what it is, something simply and implacably before us, impervious to the myths and rationalisations which had for millennia served men against dread and hopelessness. Facing grim events and grimmer possibilities, we begin to arrive at the kind of awareness that, in his analysis of survival in the Nazi camps, David Rousset describes as the positive outcome of his ordeal:

> Dynamic awareness of the strength and beauty of the sheer fact of living, in itself, brutal, entirely stripped of all superstructures—living through even the worst cataclysms and most disastrous setbacks. A cool, sensuous thrill of joy founded on the most complete understanding of the wreckage, and consequently incisiveness in action and firmness in decisions, in short, a broader and more intensely creative vigour.[5]

In a different context a statement like Rousset's might be the propaganda of yet another barbarism. But as the insight of a remarkable survivor (Rousset helped organise resistance groups within the German camps), it is a profoundly human response to the blessing and wonder of being alive. It is, in fact, a kind of observation that the rapacious survivor could never make; and it is something too which Rousset shares with other survivors like himself.

Survival, as we are defining it, is an act of refusal and resistance; and the survivor's capacity to bear inhuman hardship, his small victories against the monolith of destruction, are the forms of life-inspired stubbornness. From this point of view the survivor's struggle is largely negative. It may have a positive outcome; by living through a situation he may alter it, but this end the survivor will not count on. And there are situations, like those of Solzhenitsyn's heroes, entirely beyond the individual's influence. But this circumstance need not set a limit to the survivor's significance. As Rousset's comment suggests, there is something, a form of accomplishment, still to be considered; something found when a man is driven down past aid and hope, down through humiliation and helpless suffering to a state of complete nakedness. Here, precisely because it does not die or give up, the surviving self comes upon itself and the ground of itself, as it could never begin to do while enjoying the delicate, efflorescing manifestations of selfhood which civilisation creates and supports.

We have seen the survivor in a kind of struggle that cannot but win our respect; but also, the nature of his ordeal, its character as subjective experience, includes the discovery of values and capacities which further establish the survivor's claim to dignity. From his experience comes a special integrity and clarity of vision, and more, something close to what we speak of as the religious experience, that unique liberation and concentrated fulfilment of the saint—of those who, having passed in pain beyond family, possessions and self-will,

[5] David Rousset, *The Other Kingdom* (tr. Guthrie, 1947).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

find themselves face to face, in joy and in peace, with the numinous power of life in itself. This, or something close to it is what Rousset discovered, and this is also what holds Solzhenitsyn's deepest attention: the spiritual and transcendent dimensions of the survivor's experience; the unexpected, invaluable return.

THE SURVIVOR DOES NOT CHOOSE his fate; extremity descends upon him as upon millions of people in our century. He would escape it if he could, but finds himself in a place of imploding evil that from every side drives him toward death. Solzhenitsyn takes us to the heart of this experience, and it is in his work that the heroism of survival is most earnestly celebrated.

Solzhenitsyn's survivor is the man ardently in love with his people and their cause; the man who stood against the Nazi onslaught only to find himself thrown into a Siberian labour camp; this same man, helpless but fiercely unreconciled to victimhood, who is determined to remain a human being, innocent and unbroken, under conditions specifically devised to crush out life and spirit. His energies burn with the pointed fury of an extreme tension between the will to live and the will to remain pure—between an almost mystical appreciation of life, on the one hand, and on the other an unwavering refusal to capitulate, sell out, or in any way become accessory to a system which reduces men to puppets and meat. This is the survivor's predicament, and from it, with the intimate authority of one who has fully suffered his subject, Solzhenitsyn draws an image of man for whom the struggle to keep a living soul in a living body becomes the *sine qua non* of moral being—and in this stark sense the definitively human act.

SOLZHENITSYN'S WORLD has all the marks of extremity, with the concentration camp, terror's source and reference point, as the navel of the totalitarian nightmare. It will not do, either, to say that the camps and prisons are metaphors for society; they are the reality behind appearance, the dark heart within the body of life's business, just as, in *The First Circle,* the trucks in which the *zeks* are shipped are painted to appear as grocery vans. The practice of terror connects surfaces with the thing itself, and a man may fall—one day a diplomat, the next a prisoner—as easily as picking up the phone. In this world, ways of life and the moral attitudes which attend them are measured against a standard that derives from the experience of the survivor. Solzhenitsyn's heroes have undergone the "apprenticeship" of the camps, and their authority comes straight from the fact that they survived. And when human beings are made to accept and service an order maintained by murder and deliberate dehumanisation, the survivor's uncompromising moral vision is no more extreme than the conditions he opposes. In extremity there is a point after which compromise becomes complicity; after which irony becomes duplicity; and after which the survivor's purity takes precedence over other claims to moral authority.

The intention of totalitarian methods is control of man in the mass, and therefore destruction of individual autonomy, which is to say, elimination of the intractable human element from social organisation. Men are to live on schedule, and if the human spirit will not be programmed—not for the good of the cause, the war effort, or increased production—well then, it will have to be removed. Russia is not unique in this respect, but only, after Nazi Germany, the worst example of a universal practice.

For everywhere men set as their goal the systematic intensification of a tendency, as old as the human condition, to subordinate human ends to technical means, which in our time becomes the attempt of governments to subject whole populations to kinds of super-organisation which more efficiently serve the means (not ends) of war, production, and organisation itself. The rapid progress of this eminently 20th-century enterprise makes increasingly possible the destruction of individual persons, and in the end, of man as a human being; for whatever its methods, control aims at totality and demands, therefore, an end to freedom and integrity, to the private moral vision of self-directed men. It seems possible that a new world condition is taking shape, in which the whole of mankind is being pulled, with enormous pain, under the control of two or three governments—all of us, that is, in the hands of a few men who, whether we call them evil or well-intended, stupid or

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the pawns of ungovernable power, are in any case the agents of policies fatal to such human essentials as respect for life and the dignity a man creates by preserving his innocence and making significant choices. As Hannah Arendt has remarked:

> It is as though mankind had divided itself between those who believe in human omnipotence (who think that everything is possible if one knows how to organise masses for it) and those for whom powerlessness has become the major experience of their lives.[6]

The ethos of the survivor applies only to the latter, for a powerless man may still refuse to accept his place as victim; he may reject the benefits of abdication and, powerless, choose not to compromise—and by the fact that he exists become a reproach to the system, a sliver in the throat of power. Given the gigantic forces he confronts, his act will be painful and on a very small scale, but thereby he becomes, in his own body and person, the indispensable and life-giving proof that the human spirit will not be broken. He acts to keep faith in himself, but like the saint his example is invested with a power that moves other men to thought and inspiration.

The Move Beyond Despair

SHUKHOV, the simple-hearted hero of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*[7] is this kind of man. He has been unjustly imprisoned, and has lived years of days of sub-zero weather without decent clothing or a warm place to sleep, rising each day before the sun to twelve hours of heavy labour on a starvation diet. He steers his life through sickness and exhaustion, through the random cruelty of camp procedure and the betrayal of fellow prisoners ready to sell their souls or another's life for a few ounces of bread. And yet he is not broken: "even eight years as a convict hadn't turned him into a jackal—and the longer he spent at the camp the stronger he made himself."

Shukhov is willing to give way to other *zeks*, to perform services for men he respects, but will not make a deal with power or authority, never inform, never do a favour for the cooks or ask one of them. He has developed the *zek's* special ability to cheat the officials and camp regulations, by which he saves his strength and now and then gets an extra bowl of soup (these are major victories), but he will not cheat others in the same situation as himself. And through it all he maintains an elementary sense of self-respect:

> Every nerve in his body was taut, all his longing was concentrated in that cigarette butt—which meant more to him now, it seemed, than freedom itself—but he would never lower himself like that Fetiukov, he would never look at a man's mouth.

Due to his situation as much as to his character, Shukhov has come a long way in the wisdom of simplicity. He has learned to extract immense satisfaction—a sense of animal well-being which saves him from self-pity and despair—from slight and infrequent moments of pleasure. Working with his squad to build a wall (the temperature is −17°), Shukhov is inspired to delight by the rhythm of the work and the interplay of skills; he enjoys the warmth which spreads through his body, and later, the deeper joy of a job well done. He has, in short, learned to fully appreciate every inch of life that transcends pain and hopelessness. In this respect, by far the most important event in his life is food, and like all of Solzhenitsyn's heroes, Shukhov has developed an extraordinary attitude toward the watered-down soup and black bread which sustain him. To eat becomes a ritualised experience in which the resurrection of bodily joy—or rather, since he never gets enough, the heightened tension of desire on the verge of fulfilment—becomes the physical ground of faith in the value of life. Soup-time becomes a "sacred moment," a revelation deep in the body's pleasure that, at bottom and in spite of everything, life is strong and worth its pain:

> Shukhov took off his hat and laid it on his knee. He tasted one bowl, he tasted the other. Not bad—there was some fish in it. . . .
>
> He dug in. First he only drank the broth, drank and drank. As it went down, filling his whole body with warmth, all of his guts began to flutter inside him at their meeting with that stew. Goo-ood!
>
> And now Shukov complained about nothing; neither about the length of his stretch, nor about the length of the day, nor about their

[6] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951).

[7] Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (tr. Ralph Parker, 1963).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

swiping another Sunday. This was all he thought about now: we'll survive. We'll stick it out, God willing, till it's over.

Extremity intensifies experience, purifies it, forces men to the essence of their encounters with reality. Only sex (and how like sexual climax Shukhov's ritual is) comes close in that it too may issue in the physical intuition of a goodness at life's core. Shukhov eats his soup, and bliss wells up like a visitation, like an extravagant blessing, as though this second bowl, tricked from the cooks, were the fullest beneficence of God. Like some of Tolstoy's characters—Pierre, Levin—Shukhov attains that rarest of moments, when a man is simply, and against all evidence, happy to be alive.

WHAT SOLZHENITSYN MEANS is clear: *You have not beaten us down.* The whole point of *Ivan Denisovich* is that yes, such a man exists in such a place. If we miss this we miss everything the survivor is about. Surrounded by the combined inhumanity of man and nature, this small simple man has made a life for himself, with its grossly handicapped balance of pain and pleasure, risk and victory, deprivation and fulfilment. And to a slight but all-important degree, it is *his* life; each act in violation of camp regulations, each moment of pleasure, lifts him anew above the sheer necessity which the agents of dehumanisation thought to impose upon him. We may find it difficult to comprehend, but Solzhenitsyn's hero lives on the edge of happiness. Of course Shukhov suffers; we cannot forget that *this* day was uncommon for luck, and that pain is the substantial element in which he lives, as present and cruelly persistent as the Siberian winter. But he has come to terms with it, transcended his situation by refusing self-pity or despair or the temptation to hope for anything but life itself, and then gone on to find what goodness he can in the life he has. Deprived of ordinary possibilities, he is also free from the tangle of responsibility and failure which yokes and bends other men. And unlike those of us who enjoy the benefits of civilisation, Shukhov has only one problem, essential and clear-cut: how to survive without losing his innocence.

[8] Frederick Hoffman, *Death and the Modern Imagination* (1964).
[9] Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Cancer Ward* (tr. Rebecca Frank, 1967).

Man's Choice

INNOCENCE IS A DEFINITIVE CONDITION of the human survivor. Of course there have always been innocent victims; God's four horsemen see to that. But the large-scale and systematic victimisation of innocent populations—from Babi Yar and the Baltic resettlement to Viet Nam and Biafra—is new, if only in the speed, range, and precision of its means. It is new as a planned contingency in the political decisions of governments possessing a sufficient technology. And as Frederick Hoffman has pointed out,[8] there is no longer a rational or affective relation between victim and aggressor: victimisation is abstract, impersonal, *en masse*. What the victim himself experiences is an encompassing violence, beyond comprehension or human measure, merely "the landscape as assailant." Innocence within a landscape of total violence has been the condition of millions of people in our century, and to withstand this condition without betraying his innocence is the survivor's particular job.

Most of the convicts in Dostoevsky's *House of the Dead* are victims, but they are not innocent. They may be more sinned against than sinning, but still, each has directly violated another person. Solzhenitsyn's convicts, on the other hand, are political prisoners; theirs is an abstract guilt, defined and made official by "Section 58." They have not hurt anyone, and they do not, like the tragic hero, help to bring about their fate through some failure of moral awareness. Like Solzhenitsyn himself, they suffer because more than most men they think and judge for themselves. This, for example, is the fate of Kostoglotov in *Cancer Ward*,[9] who along with his fellow students got seven years plus exile:

> We used to come together, court the girls, dance; but the boys also talked about politics. And about HIM. . . . Two of us had fought at the front and had expected something else after the war. In May, just before the examinations, we were arrested, the girls too.

Solzhenitsyn's *zeks* end up in the camps *because* they are innocent; because, that is, control by terror is based on random selections and because their integrity is incompatible with the system in which they are trapped, causing them to become visible as individuals in contradiction to the logic of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their environment. *The First Circle* is an inventory of the victimisation of innocence: Gerasimovich for "intent to commit treason"; Kagan for "failure to inform"; Drysin for "a denunciation cooked up by some neighbours who wanted his appartment and afterwards got it."[10] It is the same in *Ivan Denisovich*; Shukhov fought at the front, was captured by the Germans, and escaped back to his own lines where he was promptly arrested for the following crime: "Yes, he'd surrendered to the Germans with the intention of betraying his country and he'd returned from captivity to carry out a mission for German intelligence. What sort of mission neither Shukhov nor the interrogator could say." No matter. From the totalitarian point of view, guilt is "historical" and "objective"; in other words, a matter of form and theory, or at best of circumstantial evidence. From the same point of view, anyone whom chance or decision singles out automatically sins against an order in which the individual person, by the very fact that he exists as such, is subversive. And Shukhov's story was in fact the fate of thousands of Russian POWs—victims of war and the criminal unpreparedness of Russian defences, of Stalin in particular, the system in general.

A totalitarian order based on terror is the clearest example of an extreme situation in which the survivor's refusal to part with his innocence is why he became a survivor in the first place. Prolonged extremity becomes for most men a slow, despairing abdication of courage and self-respect; a readiness to condone and remain silent, to look away while others die. Under Stalin this process was widespread, including (this is noted without claiming anything better to be expected from ourselves, should a reign of terror descend) just about everyone in some degree—everyone except the *zeks*. And this is Solzhenitsyn's highest claim for the men in the camps: they alone did not bow down. In *Cancer Ward* Shulubin, bitter because he too saw and remained silent, quotes Pushkin:

> *In this our age of infamy,*
> *Man's choice is but to be*
> *A tyrant, traitor, prisoner;*
> *No other choice has he.*

[10] *The First Circle* (tr. Michael Guybon, 1968).

No choice, surely, is more bitter, and yet a choice that cannot, in extremity, be avoided. When terror and massive injustice become the policies of power, when people are murdered in great numbers, when the prisons are full of men that anyone can tell are innocent, then the claims of civilisation—irony, ambiguity, compromise—lose their validity. To escape involvement becomes impossible: being *in* it, one either implements evil, allows it, or suffers it. And in a totalitarian order especially, to condone evil, to evade and rationalise, to watch and fail to speak, is precisely the mark of its victory over the human spirit. In this case only the survivor, by being thrown into the camps and by running a higher risk of death, comes through (if he comes through) with innocence intact. In extremity, that is, if a man is determined to remain a human being he must be ready to take upon himself the survivor's risk and suffering.

WE CAN ALWAYS UNCOVER legitimate reasons —social, psychological, economic—to explain why one man violates another. But the fact that good and sufficient reasons exist does not account for the separate fact that a man must choose, whatever his reasons, to act on them; he chooses to accept or resist the conditions which make violence a logical outcome of his situation. This may not be clear in the classroom, but in the concentration camps, where a man has every reason to justify Darwinian behaviour, there are yet some men—David Rousset was one, Solzhenitsyn another—who simply will not allow themselves to violate their sense of elemental decency. They make compromises; they are ruthless with themselves and others up to a point; but beyond that point they will not go, for to do so would be to destroy within themselves that deep innocence which makes faith in human value possible. Judging from the documents of the camps, the number of such men was small and yet, given the circumstances, miraculously large.

We might say, invoking myth, that man fell from the garden of God's will into the world of pain and death. He fell, that is, from innocence to victimhood, from divine grace to the condition of original sin. But this second necessity, by negating the first, opens the way to a third condition. The cycle of humanity is

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a movement of the spirit from ignorant innocence through the sorrow of experience toward that higher innocence of sainthood. Original sin is the condition of experience, of existence as a world of cannibalism, in which life lives at the expense of other life. Here survival itself is original sin—the grim theme of William Golding's novels. To accept as final the ways of the cannibal is to live as victim and victimiser, and to greater or lesser degree, most of us remain within this limit. But there is, at least sometimes, the possibility for another kind of survival. To be in the world, as one must, and yet not of it, as one may choose, is to claim that higher innocence which is most difficult and, for some men, most ardently desired.

The Way Down & the Way Up

THIS DESIRE, and the possibility of this choice, is the axis of concern in *The First Circle*. Foremost among Solzhenitsyn's band of survivors, and the centre of moral intelligence in the novel, is Gleb Nerzhin, "a prisoner in his fifth year of harness who never hurries because he expects only worse from what lies ahead." Like Solzhenitsyn himself, Nerzhin was arrested at the front for private criticism of Stalin, and given a ten-year sentence. He is a mathematician, brought to the special prison at Mavrino after four years in the camps. Mavrino is a godsend for most of the *zeks*: "Meat at dinner. Butter in the morning. Hands not flayed with work. Fingers not frozen." Here the *zeks* are scientists and technicians, and they are forced to work on the refinement of a special technology—devices which will increase the power of totalitarian control. Most of them only pretend to work, but anyone who directly refuses to co-operate is certain to be in the next transport, which means—

> Perhaps he will not arrive at his destination. In a cattle car he may die either of dysentery or of hunger, because the *zeks* will be hauled along for six days without bread. Or the guard may beat him with a hammer because someone has tried to escape. Or, at the end of the journey in an unheated car, they may toss out the frozen corpses of the *zeks* like logs.

On the other hand, the *zek* who invents a new device may earn his release. But as Gerasimovich says, "the trouble is that the inventions . . . are—well, extremely undesirable."

People outside must decide how much their "freedom" is worth: how many lies they will live by, how far they will acquiesce while their neighbours are destroyed. "If one is forever cautious, can one remain a human being?" So thinks Innokenty Volodin, the young diplomat whose simple act of humanity will send him to prison. To remain human in such a world is to become a *zek* but the *zek* too has his moments of decision. Khorobrov was arrested for defacing an election ballot, and after years in the camps he comes, at Mavrino, to this crisis:

> At the *sharashka* good sense demanded that he lose himself in the activity of Number Seven and assure himself, if not of liberation, at least of a decent existence. But nausea at all the injustices aside from his own case rose inside him until he had reached the point where a man no longer wants to live.

In extremity this may become any man's crisis. Each must decide how he will reconcile the desire for life and comfort with the desire for purity and self-respect. And in relation to this choice, each character in Solzhenitsyn's world takes his place on a scale of moral being that runs from monstrosity to sainthood.

The low end is occupied by men in positions of authority and power: petty bureaucrats, state ministers, Stalin first of all. Minister of State Security Abakumov, for example, is the model of official success. Beginning as a mere NKVD courier, "it turned out that Abakumov conducted interrogations effectively; his long arms were an asset when it came to smashing people in the face." Success has brought him close to Stalin, increasing the chance of a bullet in the neck, and his dread filters down through the official hierarchy, each man beneath the heel of the man above him. All the ministers, bureaucrats, jailors, etc, that serve the system comprise the "They" to which the *zeks* refer, men without character or depth, the product of the machine they service. There is immense cruelty, suffering without end, but the brutality of the "They" is not, for example, a matter of sadism. Mainly it is institutionalised evil, carried out by men who have abdicated their humanity, men who have made the decision—from fear, from the desire for safety and comfort—to work with the system. The same may be said of those *zeks* who sell out. Siromankha, king of the informers, is the kind of man whose survival

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

capacity is legendary: "Those who, as camp guards, could club their countrymen in the face; those who, as bread-cutters and cooks, could eat the bread of others who were starving." Plainly, there is more than one kind of survivor, and a point after which the heroism of survival turns into its opposite. "The wolfhound is right and the cannibal is wrong."

AT MAVRINO, NERZHIN is forced to work, but he does not give himself to the purpose imposed upon him. His desk is piled with books and folders, but "in fact it was all a false front." His real work is a collection of notes in which he analyses the failure of the Revolution—how, that is, history purifying itself came to result in concentration camps. But then he is called before the officials and asked to volunteer for a special project, and this, to willingly offer his service, he will not do. If he were to agree he might earn his release, but on the other hand, his refusal "was certain to result, perhaps very soon, in a long and arduous journey to Siberia or the Arctic, to death or to a hard victory over death." Other *zeks*, like Rubin and Sologdin, decide to work for their freedom (and Solzhenitsyn allows them a sympathetic understanding). But Nerzhin is uncompromising; he will keep himself pure and take his chances. As soon as the decision is made his spirit begins to shore its strength, drawing on the survivor's special wisdom:

> Nerzhin . . . was now thinking that only the first year of camp could finish him, that he had achieved a completely different tempo, that he would not try to scramble into the ranks of the goldbrickers, that he would not be afraid of camp labour, but would slowly, with an understanding of life's depths, go out for morning line-up in his padded jacket smeared with plaster and fuel oil and tenaciously drag through the twelve-hour day—and so on, for the whole five years remaining until the end of his term. Five years is not ten. One can last five.

The odd thing is that Nerzhin prefers the camps to Mavrino. As long as he must exist in the lower depths he would rather go all the way; for there, at the absolute limit of soul and body, life is forced to its irreducible elements, truths on which, should he survive, a man may firmly build. "Camp life," Solzhenitsyn tells us, "exceeds in its ruthlessness anything known of the lives of cannibals and rats." But at the same time he speaks of "the harsh apprenticeship of camp." To what can this refer, if not to the apprenticeship of one's own soul, to the crystallisation—as under immense pressure carbon turns to diamond—of that essence all men share but seldom realise or even acknowledge. As Nerzhin puts it, "one must try to temper, to cut, to polish one's soul so as to become a *human being*" (Solzhenitsyn's italics). This recalls Shukhov: "the longer he spent at the camp the stronger he made himself."

It seems clear that the ordeal of survival becomes, at least for some men, an experience of growth and purification. By virtue of the extraordinary demands made upon the man in extremity, his struggle to remain human is in fact a process of becoming more—essentially, purely—human. Not, perhaps, the humanness of refinement and proliferation, but of fundamental moral vision, of the knowledge of good and evil, and of the will to stand by this knowledge, on which the value of everything else depends. Nerzhin says: "I had no idea what good and evil were, and whatever was allowed seemed fine to me. But the lower I sink into this inhumanly cruel world, the more I respond to those who, even in such a world, speak to my conscience." For the survivor too, the way down is the way up.

THE WAY DOWN is a passage through loss and risk and endless suffering, a process of concentration and self-knowledge issuing, for those who come through, in the stark fulfilment of spiritual intensification and authentic selfhood. The survivor's pain is always there, in the body, in the heart and in the soul, a seamless chamber which holds him caught, and yet the condition which shears the self down to what is essential and irreducible. In extremity a man's strength is inversely proportionate to the number of his needs, a point made by Bruno Bettelheim, when he attacks "business as usual."[11] The survivor has no business as usual, neither family nor position, neither possessions nor opportunity to pursue ordinary satisfactions. For better and worse he is free of the needs which keep other men trapped in self-alienating activities. He has only the purity of a self which exists beyond all save the need to live, and this

[11] Bruno Bettelheim, *The Informed Heart* (1960).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

condition, painful though it is, is also a position of power. State Minister Abakumov can make his subordinates tremble in nervous terror (as he himself does in front of Stalin), but his power does not penetrate the iron soul of *zek* Bobynin. "Shout at your colonels and generals," Bobynin tells him, "they have too much in life they're afraid of losing."

In all of Stalin's Russia, none but the lowly *zeks* can speak without fear. And this, as Bobynin points out, is the crack in totalitarian perfection:

> . . . you are strong only as long as you don't deprive people of *everything*. For a person you've taken everything from is no longer in your power. He's free all over again.

Like other types of the hero, the survivor takes his stand directly on the line, but he is unique in that he stays there. And it is there, where life meets death as an equal, that his peculiar freedom and power become real and effective. His vision is not clouded by the protective illusions which civilisation fosters, and he sees, with acute lucidity, that existence is a wager between life and death, that spirit thrives in the balance of being and non-being. He does not suddenly, in the ambush of crisis, discover his mortality, for in order to remain alive he must at every moment acknowledge the centrality of death. And this familiarity has not failed to breed its proper contempt; he may be killed, but so long as he lives he will not be intimidated.

And closer to death, the survivor is closer to life than other men. His will to survive is one with the thrust of life in itself, numinous and inexhaustible, severely joyful and as stubborn as the upsurge of spring. In this state a strange exultation fills the soul, a sense of being equal to the worst (and so long as he lives, the survivor *is* equal to the worst). This is the attitude of those *zeks*—Nerzhin, Gerasimovich, Khorobrov—who at the end of *The First Circle* are shipped off to the transport:

> Concentrating on the turns the van was making, the *zeks* fell silent.
>
> Yes, the taiga and the tundra awaited them, the record cold of Oymyakon and the copper excavations of Dzhezkazgan; pick and barrow; starvation rations of soggy bread; the hospital; death. The very worst.
>
> But there was peace in their hearts.
>
> They were filled with the fearlessness of those who have lost *everything*, the fearlessness which is not easy to come by but which endures.

This is a state of mind such as few of us might expect to know; but embroiled as we are in the lesser symmetries of life and death, it is something felt to be invaluable, a courage beyond hope which reveals the unexpected and even joyous strength of man at the limits of life.

The Presence of Life

HAVING FOUGHT AGAINST the Nazi invasion, Solzhenitsyn's survivors are also soldiers, and this is how they think of themselves as day by day they withstand extremity with the modest tactics that keep them going. "A soldier gets along best on the defensive," says Kostoglotov in *Cancer Ward*, and indeed the survivor's struggle is very much like guerrilla warfare—as Mao defines it, "tactical offensives within a strategy of defence." In *The First Circle* Nerzhin succeeds in retrieving his copy of Yesenin from the security officer, a pitched battle executed with surprise and speed, a tactic in the strategy of spiritual self-preservation. As Nerzhin says, "It's not so much the book . . . as the principle: they must not beat us down." But the survivor's enemy is death, and in the end he is a soldier who can never hope for more than small and temporary victories.

The cancer ward is death's home ground, and those who find themselves there have no thought but to survive, to employ any medical tactic which may strengthen their defensive; and, since death will not retreat, to come to terms with their situation so as to live beyond fear and despair. "In the face of death, in the face of the striped panther of death who had already lain down beside him, in the same bed, Vadim, as a man of intellect, had to find a formula for living." Kostoglotov's answer is to live as the soldier lives: aware of danger and ready to die, yet putting up the longest fight possible, and regarding all men kindly but without pity as brothers in a losing war—"This bullet was yours; the next may be mine."

This hardness of the living heart is something a man like Kostoglotov cannot do without. After the War he entered the university, but before his life could begin to take shape, he was arrested and sent to the camps. After that, exile, and then cancer, so we cannot

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

avoid the impression that Kostoglotov, still in his thirties, is an old man. The extreme pathos of his situation is that, on the verge of death, he is a man who never had a life, "a river that doesn't go anywhere, that haphazardly gives away its best water and power along the way." He has survived years of incredible hardship, missed death by a hair's breadth, only to find, not the tree of life flaming with blossoms, with promise and budding fruits, but this implacable cancer which will soon shut him from life. Kostoglotov thirsts for fulfilment with a fierceness only equalled by his despair of attaining it, and having acquired in the camps "the ability to shake off all but the main thing," he comes at last to the humblest kind of hope: "I want to live for a bit without guards and without pain, and that's the limit of my dreams."

This is as much as he can hope for from treatment in the cancer ward:

> not for a complete new life, but for an extra portion, like the make-weight end of a loaf fastened onto the main part of the ration, a twig stuck through the two to hold them together—part of the same ration, but a separate piece.

This image is drawn from life in the camps, and what it suggests is that when men die in millions, the myth of rebirth dies too. The survivor only lasts; what he achieves is some "small, additional, added-on life." And even this has its price, for in extremity, every moment of life is purchased at exorbitant cost, forcing the survivor to repeatedly consider the balance of values. As Kostoglotov puts it:

> I have often wondered before, and now particularly I wonder: What, after all, is the highest price one should pay for life? How much should one pay, how much is too much?

This question is always present, and each turn of the situation requires a new answer. So it is when Kostoglotov enters the cancer ward. Very nearly dead, his chance for a bit more of life depends on a hormone treatment which will deprive him of his virility, and this is the decision he must face: "To become a walking husk of a man—isn't that an exorbitant price? It would be a mockery. Should I pay it?" And if he pays, what then?

> *Whom shall I seek, with whom share*
> *The heavy-hearted joy of my survival?*

He would share it with a woman, Vega Gangart, and come to the fullness of life in love and a home. But to live at all is to give up this chance. We can suppose that this lusty man would once have led a simple fruitful life. But now he must continue to live against encroaching cancer with the knowledge that he has lost everything, that love and work, children, life ripening within, will not be his to try. And this solitude, beyond resolve or answer, is surely the ultimate pain of the surviving self.

BUT HE DOES CHOOSE to live, as if, given the man he is, there were no alternative, or as if life itself were final judge of what price is worth paying. Once more Kostoglotov sacrifices a part of himself in order to preserve what he calls "the main thing." He will not give up, because after the camps he cannot, in this last extremity, negate the only meaning his life has had; and because to continue to live, even for a few months, is absolutely worth it. This is clear from the happiness of his walk through the city: his rapport with the teeming life and motion, the intense relish with which he eats some roasted meat, the tender gratefulness he feels toward Vega for her love. It is a wonderful day, and the wisdom of Kostoglotov's deep delight is apparent: "Even if next spring never came, even if this was the last, it was one *extra* spring! And thanks be for that!" Like Shukhov and like Nerzhin, Kostoglotov is able to respond to life's least gift with a fullness of gratitude that is, finally, greater and more powerful than hope.

This is the survivor's small but priceless inheritance. In this state of mind Kostoglotov leaves the hospital in search of a flowering apricot tree, not to possess it of course, but only, for a moment's time, to behold it, to rest his joy on this delicate, enduring emblem of life. Then he will board the train, find a place to lie in the baggage rack, and settle himself for the journey back into exile:

> Others had not survived. He had survived. . . . It was good to stretch out. . . . Only when the train jolted and started to move did he feel a stab of pain around his heart, around his soul—somewhere in the most crucial part of his chest. He turned over, lay face downward on the trench coat, shut his eyes and nuzzled his face into the knapsack, lumpy with loaves of bread. . . . The train moved, and Kostoglotov's boots, as if dead, dangled over the passageway, toes down.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The pathos of his final condition is very great, yet tempered by his will to bear it. Kostoglotov is a man without hope, but even so he has lived as long as he could, without damage to his innocence, without harm to his fellowmen.

And in this effort—to carry on when ordinary avenues of fulfilment are closed and death lies visible ahead—the heroism of survival reaches its limit. In the end Kostoglotov has nothing, nothing at all but this short reprieve, this extra life free and his own. But for the survivor this is everything. Pathos dissolves in the liberation of total loss, and renunciation of life's particulars opens on the glory and power of the main thing, the presence of life in itself.

SOLZHENITSYN'S CELEBRATION OF LIFE is the outcome of his own apprenticeship. It owes nothing to the abstractly-conceived vitalism of the last century, and is something hardly to be known by thought alone. And yet, since the survivor loses everything except life, life and his capacity to see an absolute value therein, we cannot but wonder what it is he finds, what is *there* to hold and sustain him. Why one man survives and another does not, is not fully explicable; chance and character play their part, but something else as well, a sort of grace. And what the survivor arrives at by reaching past despair *and* hope would seem to be similarly unnameable. But surely he comes on something, an entrance to the heart of being, the furious purity of an endless energy, of life in itself, something unexpectedly uncovered when the spirit is driven down to its roots, all insolence lost, and through its pain brought to a pristine concentration, and to a sense of finality and quietude that, once again, surpasses understanding. In another age we might have called it God, God the bleak, the rush, the final point of a vibrant, unshakable peace.

Whatever it is, the survivor is driven to embrace it, aware of its power and holiness. And whatever it is—to call it life will have to do—it is the fundament of flesh and the soul, the ground on which the survivor stands, upright in innocence and in the will to continue as a human being.

Woman of Sagami

That person, from my naked body's
Finest point, withdrew
First my ring of antique gold.

Then my hairpins too
Slowly he groped and disengaged,
And laid them down beside
Our pillow.

I could feel the skin
Beginning to elide.

Then, for the first time, I could feel
The skull's true jelliness;
Even the smallest bone began
To melt, to deliquesce.

And after that a violent force,
Too violent to escape,
Fangled my naked body back
To surety of shape.

Anzai Hitoshi

translated by Graeme Wilson and Atsumi Ikuko

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Path Ahead to Europe

LEOPOLD LABEDZ: On Losing an Empire

EVER SINCE the First World War, Great Britain has shown symptoms of a marked reluctance to face changes in the international situation. Decisions to meet new challenges affecting her position were made after long delays in the recognition of their true nature. This was the case with the abandonment of the Gold Standard and with the slow acceptance of the need to resist Hitler.

Historically, the change in the international situation amounted to the ending of the Era of European expansion and domination which began in the 16th century. The first World War radically undermined European imperial positions; the second World War destroyed them completely. European empires everywhere began to crumble. The fact that Britain was one of the victors of the last War did not make much difference to the outcome: the "end of Empire" was part and parcel of the general European contraction. The fate of Great Britain was substantially linked here with that of Europe as a whole—the real question was how she would adjust herself to the post-imperial era.

Since the Second World War the British position in the world balance of power has become immeasurably weaker. Yet the demise of Empire did not make the national inhibition about facing international reality any less pronounced. This was partly due to the luck of the British in avoiding the fate of other European countries during the last War—German occupation—and also to British political wisdom in carrying out the Imperial withdrawal in an orderly fashion. There were thus no traumatic experiences to bring home the full realisation of the salient features of the new situation. On the other hand, the British reluctance to join the European community had deep historical roots, reinforcing the attachment to the status quo of yesterday and resulting in the politics of nostalgia.

The pattern was not unfamiliar. At first there was the refusal to admit the necessity of choice and then there were delays in making it, so that when the decision about the application to join the Common Market was finally made its implementation became difficult and the price of entry and of adjustment higher than it might have been if the decision about it had been arrived at more promptly.

Britain emerged from the War weakened but because of her stand during her "finest hour" her prestige was higher than ever. Yet when she could have had the leadership of Europe on a plate she was against European involvement. Her post-War foreign policy was based on a cosy rationalisation in the form of the "theory of the three concentric circles": the special relationship with America, the hub of the emergent Commonwealth, and cross-Channel connections. When the Common Market was formed Britain did not believe in its success; if she had joined it at the time much of the present discussion about the price of entry would have been irrelevant. Those who are not in principle against "joining Europe" must surely realise that there were political and economic costs involved in the delays which were due first to the British and then to the French unwillingness to promote the European idea. It would be a pity if now that the governments of the two countries are ready for it, Britain should fail to use this historic opportunity. If it is missed it would involve paying a far higher price than those who concentrate on economic issues are willing to contemplate. They no longer invoke now "the theory of the three concentric circles" but simply engage in *Greuelpropaganda* about the economic price of joining the Common Market and the loss of cultural identity and political sovereignty which it allegedly involves. But they do not put forward any coherent argument about the future over-all orientation of British foreign policy and the premises on which it is to be based. When Mr Acheson remarked that Britain had lost her empire but had not yet found a new role in the world, he came in for a good deal of criticism in this country.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Those who were most upset about it are now opposing the European orientation. But they use only negative terms in the discussion of Britain's position and her prospects. They are not able to provide any positive alternative to joining the Common Market more adequate than "the theory of the three concentric circles". And what has happened to these circles?

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP with America has undergone a steady erosion, not in the sense that the language ties are less important, or that British security (like that of other West European countries) is no longer dependent on the American umbrella, but in the sense that British influence in Washington is now hardly of a special nature, scarcely different from French or German. One does not have to read Mr Harold Wilson's memoirs to know that; for years now it has been little more than a nostalgic myth rooted in the reminiscences of the Churchill-Roosevelt era. Likewise the evolution of the Commonwealth hardly advanced British influence in the world. Britain faced here a developing situation in which she had political obligations without the corresponding ability to "ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm". Cases like the Central African Federation, South Africa, Rhodesia, Biafra, the Indo-Pakistan war, and the recent internal aggression-cum-genocide in Bengal illustrate the incapacity of the "mother-country" to deal with a number of her Commonwealth children. Even cricket matches, those symbols of the "invisible ties" between the Commonwealth countries, became targets for violent demonstrations. The meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers showed increasingly the weakening of political cohesion.

The "third circle"—the European community—has in the meantime become an economic success. But its political development was sabotaged by de Gaulle's *folie de grandeur*, a policy of empty gestures allegedly promoting *la gloire* but in fact only satisfying de Gaulle's nationalistic ego; it was a compensation for the psychological complexes inherited by France during the War, at the time of *le chagrin et la pitié*.

Now that Pompidou is quietly shedding the Gaullist legacy, the past experience with "the three circles" would strongly indicate that a refusal to join the Common Market might signify for Great Britain a rather unpleasant situation in which she would find herself falling between three stools, two of which are by now two-legged; the stability of the third may depend very much on the British decision to become a member of the Community. If she does, it will contribute not only to the momentum of European unification, but will help to maintain the internal stability and balance of power in the Community.

EVEN MORE IMPORTANT is the growth of Europe as a political factor in the international balance of power. This is imperative if East-West equilibrium is not to be upset by the simultaneous process of growth of American neo-isolationism and increase in Soviet strength. In the last decade the position of the United States as the protector of the West has been seriously undermined by the internal effects of the Viet Nam war and other manifestations of home-front unrest. The combined psychological effect was the rise of neo-isolationist tendencies on the American political scene. The American "withdrawal symptoms" may not prevail; Senator Mansfield may be less dangerous to European security than alarmist observers fear; but the tendency he represents is bound to have some effect on the American posture in foreign policy and thus on the world balance of power. The American commitments in Europe may be maintained but, as Secretary Connally indicated, the U.S. expects Europe to carry a bigger share of its own defence burden. If the American role in the maintenance of the balance of power is not increasingly supplemented by *the expansion of the role played by Europe*, it is not difficult to imagine the end result of this process: a dangerous vacuum of power in Europe which would, sooner or later, be exploited by the Soviet Union. If Britain joins the Community she may or may not become richer, but she will be in a politically stronger position and would have a better chance of remaining independent. The alternative course may eventually result in the break-up of the European Community. And the Balkanisation of Western Europe could be a stage in the subsequent Finlandisation of individual West European countries.

Thus, the interests of the West in general, of Europe, and of Great Britain coincide at this point: there is a clear and obvious need to prevent the appearance of a power vacuum in Western Europe which will be, if the present equilibrium in Europe is upset, a step towards a scramble among European nations to make their own separate arrangements with the Soviet Union and open the way to an eventual Soviet hegemony over the whole of Europe and not just one half of it. If the present shift in the balance of power against the West is not halted by the European effort to make up for what Raymond Aron has called "the end of the American era", such catastrophic consequences cannot in the end be excluded.

But even if the European Community does not break up, despite its inability to maintain a momentum by expanding from Six to Ten, what would be the consequences of non-entry for Great Britain herself?

THIS IS A SUBJECT ON WHICH the anti-Marketeers prefer not to dwell; but one can imagine the *dénouement* which such a development could entail. Externally, Britain's prestige would fall; all "three concentric circles" would take her less not more seriously if she did not join. International faith in the future of Britain would slump. Her margin of manoeuvre in foreign policy would shrink still further. Internally her morale would fall: *pauvre Angleterre* would become the conti-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nental epithet. Britain might indeed become "the sick man outside Europe".

In such a situation a likely course for British foreign policy would be to seek at any price a close *rapprochement* with the Soviet Union to counteract the effect of past foreign-policy failures. This is a course which would commend itself to a small number of anti-Marketeers, but it is doubtful how many among those for whom Mr Kosygin is not (to use Mr Wilson's expression) "part of the British way of life", will share his euphoria, so artificially generated in his London speech of 17 July, about Mr Brezhnev's Tiflis speech. The great majority of the British people still takes its democratic ideals and institutions sufficiently seriously to be less enthusiastic than Mr Wilson about the London-Tiflis axis. Mr Wilson's reference in the same speech to President Nixon's visit to Peking as opening up "new hopes, immeasurable horizons" (in contrast to the "aridities and infertilities of the cold war" language of Mr Heath's pro-European policy) was clearly designed to please the "progressive" Left at the Labour Party conference. What Mr Wilson did not mention on the occasion was that while Soviet propaganda decried the *White Paper as the continuation of "Cold War"* (as it always denounced anything leading to the growth of West European unity), Chinese propaganda has shown a positive interest in the process of European integration[1]. According to the official Hsinhua Agency British entry would constitute an embarrassment to the "dual hegemony" of the USA and the USSR. That the Soviet Union would try to prevent facing the Chinese colossus in the East and a unified Western Europe in the West is only too natural. Is there any reason, however, for Britain to help such Soviet policy? And to be on the side of the Soviet Union against Western Europe?

Yet in the long run this is a likely outcome of the attitude of "splendid isolation" in 1971. As past experience has shown, this attitude was not a wise one when Britain was still a great power. It is even less realistic in a world where, having lost that status, she can easily move from the position of an intermediate to that of a small power. The Beaverbrook press provided a shining example of such an attitude. The *Daily Express,* in its anti-European crusade, did not even realise the ironic incongruity between its imperial nostalgia and its reporting of current political events. For instance on one and the same editorial page of its issue of 17 June it announced that Mr Heath should "forget about Europe" and complained in a big headline "NOW MALTA PLANS TO GIVE BRITAIN THE BOOT".

THE ANTI-MARKETEERS AVOID facing post-War realities and especially the political limitations inherent in the diminishing stature of Britain, Europe and the West in the international balance of power. They prefer instead to concentrate on the narrow economic issues of today, frightening the British housewife with the prospect of rising food prices (and at a time when they have already been rising steadily here without British participation in the Common Market).

Perhaps the most astonishing feature of the Common Market debate is its concentration on economics. It is of course an important factor; but historic decisions of this kind must ultimately be made on political grounds. Nor must one forget that economic forecasting is something less than an exact science.

The arguments of the most formidable spokesman of the anti-Market case, Professor Nicholas Kaldor, suffer from that most common deficiency among professional economists, the lack of political perspective; they may also be economically unsound. In his contribution to the 1963 ENCOUNTER Symposium, Professor Kaldor predicted that the decision to join would make Britain a "depressed area", a fate to be avoided by "a comprehensive policy of vigorous economic planning" in association with the Commonwealth (which he thought was "gaining strength"). Subsequently, Professor Kaldor had a chance to advise the British government on how to implement "a comprehensive policy of vigorous economic planning" (just as previously he had had a chance to advise many underdeveloped countries on their economic policies). But somehow the white heat of Mr Wilson's technological revolution failed to achieve economic growth comparable to that of the Common Market, and British economic decline followed the previous (and subsequent) pattern. It is, of course, perfectly possible that it will continue even if Britain joins the Common Market. The pro-Marketeers advertise the rise in Common Market real wages in contrast to what has happened in Britain. Yet it is clear that even if the immediate effect of joining and the price of adjustment are not very drastic, they would obviously involve a transitional period of economic dislocation before the more positive economic effect of the Common Market *Grossraumwirtschaft* can accrue to British industry. Whether the latter will actually rise to the challenge or not obviously does not depend on economic factors alone. Opinions, hopes, and fears here go beyond the strictly economic field. It is embarrassing that one has to repeat such elementary truths because economists tend to forget that real social psychology is more complicated than is implied in

[1] The Left-wing *Le Nouvel Observateur* (19 July) wrote that China "was furiously hostile to the 'European' policy dreamt of by General de Gaulle, 'from Atlantic to the Urals', which could result in the increase of Soviet power. The same motive accounts for the surprised French, Canadian, and Italian diplomats hearing their Chinese counterparts approve the entry of Great Britain into the Common Market. . . ." Similarly, the correspondent of *France-Soir* in Peking, Maurice Delarue, wrote that "the Chinese now even support European unity, because they consider it a counter-balance to the hegemony of the superpowers, and approve the expected British entry into the European Community."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the simplified assumptions of economic analysts. But Professor Kaldor, whose advice to the underdeveloped countries was so often followed by riotous outburst when his policies were implemented, should be aware of the pitfalls of economic analysis divorced from a sound political perspective. Keynes wrote "The Economic Consequences of Mr Churchill" when the latter failed to realise the implications of clinging to the old Gold Standard in a new situation. Someone will surely write with equal sharpness on "The Political Consequences of Professor Kaldor" if Britain fails to join the Common Market.

How politically naive Professor Kaldor is can be seen from his reply in the *New Statesman* (16 July) to the argument used in the White Paper on the Common Market that it is not really possible to make valid numerical estimates of some economic factors on which the anti-Marketeers dwell:

> If the government persists in saying that no such estimation is possible, how can they say, in the same breath (para 56) that "the government are confident that membership of the enlarged Community will lead to much improved efficiency and productivity in British industry, with a higher rate of investment and a faster growth of real wages"? If nothing can be estimated or "quantified", where does this confidence come from?

How touchingly simple-minded is the political perception of a distinguished economist! It assumes that political confidence can only come from quantifying the unquantifiable rather than from a wider understanding of politics and history. It is baffled by an approach which, while taking into account the best economic estimates wherever they are possible, refuses to fall into a semantic trap—namely, the naive behaviouristic reductionism of the "dismal science" and the "quantification lunacy" of some of its practitioners.

IN MY VIEW of the general debate, it is the underlying political attitudes of both pro- and anti-Market experts which determine their opinions and not their expertise.

The element of rationalisation and/or of tactical hypocrisy was extremely obvious in this debate, where many Parliamentarians pretended that they were "waiting for the final terms" from Luxembourg and Brussels before they could make up their minds, although it is perfectly clear that in fact they have made up their minds on other grounds. And *rightly so*—because the issues transcend the marginalia of the final agreement. As the young participant in the *Guardian*'s "Young Eyes on Europe" wrote: "Maybe in 50 years' time my children will say that being a European is more natural than being a Briton. At any rate they will have completely forgotten if our butter in the 1980s was expensive. . . ."

The Common Market debate has been particularly striking not because the two major parties were divided, but because it united the extremes. Not since the Stalin-Hitler pact have we seen such strange bed-fellows uniting in a common cause. For both John Gollan and Enoch Powell "going into Europe" is a "sell-out". The League of Empire Loyalists and the Communist Party joined hands to denounce the iniquities of the Europeans. For the *Spectator* and the *New Statesman* neither Wogs nor capitalists begin at Calais, but the arguments used in these two journals to oppose entry were often not too far from this level. For example, Mr Peter Shore, in what he believes to be the best form of his socialist conscience, remarked in the *New Statesman* that the benefits from the Community's agricultural budget which will accrue to Britain are small, because they "*will be focussed on the miserably poor peasant farmers of Southern Italy and France* . . . ." But his socialist heart weeps for the plight of the New Zealand farmers! It was also in the *New Statesman* that its ex-editor, Paul Johnson, tried to trace the anti-European genealogy in Britain as far back as the first anti-marketeer, Ethelred the Unready.

Was the *Spectator* any better? In its Conservative post-imperial pique it put forward a common platform with the new jingoism of "Little Englanders" from the Labour Left. Like Enoch Powell himself, it was now *against* all "the three circles", combining colour prejudice with anti-Americanism and anti-Europeanism. It thundered editorially (5 June) against "the European-Europe fanatics" and said in hysterical exaggeration that if they "get their way . . . we will then have no need of policies of our own or any means with which they might be implemented". It has even discovered (eight years after the French veto) that it is the French who are luring the English into Europe!

IT IS AMUSING to recall that the present attitude of *The Spectator* was expressed 14 years ago in similar form by the Gaullist deputy in the French parliament, Leo Hamon: "The [Rome] Treaty strips France of her personality, deprives her of a way of life which, as the country will see when it returns to its senses, is being sacrificed for a mirage." Today Mr Hamon, as the official spokesman of the present French government, has changed his tune, in line with that of Mr Pompidou. *The Spectator*, however, has gone on repeating his old arguments about the "loss of sovereignty" and the "diminution of national identity" which will be sacrificed for a mirage. What unreliable tunesmiths!

In the Common Market countries the polemics of yesterday are forgotten. The experience of the progress of the European Community has rendered the arguments of its opponents quite obsolete. But it is worth recalling that the same pattern of an unholy alliance of the reactionary Left and the nostalgic Right was very much present in the political struggles about the formation of the Common Market in the countries of its six would-be members. As Richard Mayne reminded us in *The Listener* (24 June 1971):

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its fiercest opponents—like the fiercest "anti-Marketeers" now—came from the outer fringes of Left and Right. The extreme Right, in Italy Monarchist and Neo-Fascist, attacked the proposed merger of national sovereignty; the communists opposed what they called German rearmament, meaning German contingents in a European army.

In France, the Gaullists voted against the ratification of the Rome Treaty, as did the Right-wing Refugee Party in Germany, the Flemish nationalists in Belgium, and the Right-wing Protestants in Holland. Not to mention the Communists in all these countries.

It is also pertinent to recall that socialists in Western Europe favoured British entry all along, and that at their meeting in Brussels (28 June) they greeted with enthusiasm the prospect that it might now be accomplished. Yet the socialist *Tribune* disregarded such expressions of socialist solidarity and castigated the pro-European attitude of the Labour pro-Marketeers as "phoney internationalism".[2]

The pro-Marketeer Labour leaders (some of whom signed the *Times* pro-European manifesto, but who changed statesmanship for New Statesmanship) were no less dazzling in looking for intellectual excuses for their political contortionism. Few could take their sophistries seriously, and it is likely that they only succeeded in discrediting themselves. Of all the arguments used in the Great Debate theirs were the most pitiful, with their Janus-like duality of declared pro-Europeanism in theory and anti-Europeanism in practice. In comparison with their belated turncoating, the celebrated "double-crossmanship" of the editor of the *New Statesman*, however incompatible with the stand of the Labour government in power (in which he was a Minister), seemed a shining example of political forthrightness. Intellectually, their search for an alibi, after they had overcome the inhibitions on their European commitment ("To rat or not to rat, that is the question"), could not be taken seriously. It was too obviously another example of a blatant (and short-sighted) political opportunism. It reminded Harold Macmillan of the attitude of their predecessors in the 1930s: "They were in favour of rearmament—*but not under Chamberlain.*"

No less amusing was the campaign in *Tribune* on "the Common Market pedigree" in which its editor and several left-wing Labour MPs denounced it as a capitalist "baited trap", a big-business enterprise "born out of the Cold War", only to appear on one advertisement page of *The Times* as the signatories of an anti-Market manifesto together with several right-wing Tory MPs whom they had always considered as their most reactionary opponents. It was touching to read the name of Michael Foot near that of Anthony Fell, of John Mendelson near that of Neil Marten, of Renee Short near that of Harold Soref. Only one name was missing—*quelle finesse de sentiments!*—that of Enoch Powell . . .

But perhaps the most strange combination produced by the political opposition to British entry into the Common Market was that of the Soviet Party Secretary and some Soviet-ological experts. While Mr Brezhnev opposed the move and the Communist parties mobilised their forces to denounce what the *Morning Star* called "HEATH'S 'NOBLE IDEAL'—A SIX SELL-OUT", Tibor Szamuely wrote in the *Spectator* (2 January) that "today, with Brandt's *Ostpolitik* in full swing, the EEC might actually be quite useful to Russia" and that "there is always a strong chance that the British Government will drag the country into an increasingly neutralist, even pro-Soviet Europe".

Yet the trophy for originality must surely go to A. J. P. Taylor, who with a fine historical sense wrote in the ENCOUNTER symposium that "entry into Europe is the greatest non-question of all time". The historical imagination shown here about an issue which for so many seems (in George Ball's words) one of "the most important decisions of the century" truly equals that demonstrated in Mr Taylor's evaluation of Hitler and the non-question of his primary contribution to the causes of the Second World War.[3]

---

[2] To make it all even more grotesque, the eminently anti-Labour *Daily Express* (2 July) warned Mr Wilson that unless he led the Labour Party against the Common Market he would be betraying its principles: "No Labour leader can forget the fate of Mr Ramsay MacDonald who aligned himself with his opponents and broke the Labour Movement." On the next day the *Express* castigated editorially Mr Hugh Scanlon, the leading Trade Union anti-Marketeer, for his "sabre-rattling" on the Industrial Relations Bill. The Vicar of Bray himself would not reach such a level of hypocrisy. Only Mr Wilson could match it. And he did. But, as the *Sunday Telegraph* (18 July) reflected, "not even the most ardent anti-Marketeer really believes that if there was a majority in the Labour Party in favour of acceptance he would be urging rejection. Can it really be suggested that if Messrs Jones and Scanlon, with their mammoth card votes, were supporting entry, Mr Wilson would not be doing likewise?"

[3] Mr Kenneth Tynan must also be given a dunce's cap. He defined the European Common Market (in a letter to *The Times*, 27 July) as "the most blatant historical vulgarity since Hitler's Thousand Year Reich." The creator of *Oh! Calcutta!* was afraid that "going into Europe" would preclude socialism in Britain. It is surprising that he is not interested in international intercourse and wants only to promote "socialism in one country." Is it only in Britain that there should be no exploitation of man by man (or *vice versa*)? In any case, surely, he is not exactly the person who can be taken as an arbiter of taste and a scourge of vulgarity. Nor can Tynan, who supported Rolf Hochhuth's slanderous fantasy that Winston Churchill had ordered General Sikorski's death (he argued that, in his eyes, this only increased Churchill's stature!), be considered a particularly well-qualified public figure to give lessons in political morality.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IF THE CURRENT SYMPOSIUM IN ENCOUNTER (and that of 1963) shows anything, it is that intellectuals tend to reflect the mood of the country in general. Judging by some contributions, the main difference between the pro-Marketeers and anti-Marketeers is the degree of their indifference towards Europe. But political sophistication is not to be confused with political wisdom. Between 1963 and the present, British public opinion shifted against the Common Market; if it reacts in favour, the attitude of some wavering British intellectuals will probably also change accordingly. George Ball wrote (*Newsweek*, 14 June) that:

> with chagrin at prior rejection combined with the loss of momentum, many in Britain have now grown hesitant, not out of delusions of power but fear of weakness—the sense that they may be swallowed up by an alien entity larger than themselves—a fear that seems strangely out of character for a people who have struggled so bravely and overcome so much.

The Spectator (5 June) illustrated this attitude perfectly:

> The alternative is the continued existence of the nation with its own identity, its own institutions, its own sovereign Parliament, and the ability independently to pursue to the best of its abilities the policies which best fit its own interests as from time to time its own electorate determines.

But such "ability independently to pursue" is rooted in illusions which the electorate will share only as long as the anti-Marketeers succeed in playing on its most obscurantist prejudices and its nostalgia for the past, as well as in identifying the cause of European unification with the idea of "rising food prices", ignoring the causes of the present inflation in Britain. British entry into the Common Market is not, of course, a sufficient condition for the unification of Europe. Few serious pro-Europeans are utopian or euphoric about it. Given the complacency of the public about the problems of European defence and other difficulties, one can easily predict that British entry will be followed by a series of internal tensions within the enlarged Community. But it will still be a step in the right direction. What is at stake is the future not only of Britain but of the European civilisation of which she forms an important part.

SINCE THE FIRST WORLD WAR, we have known (in the celebrated phrase of Paul Valéry) that civilisations are mortal. But there is nothing automatic about it, just as there is nothing inevitable about "post-imperial decline". Historical alternatives do exist. Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper has drawn our attention to previous cases of the "recovery of Europe" in history, and there is no reason why it should not happen again.

In the seventeenth century it was only Spain which failed to adjust itself to the new situation. While other West European countries overcame the severe economic and political crisis and successfully developed new intellectual and scientific ideas, economic techniques, and administrative arrangements, the Spanish Depression of the seventeenth century resulted not only in the decline of the Spanish empire and the renewed isolation of Spain from Europe, but in a long epoch of intellectual inertia and political and economic stagnation. As an historian of the period put it, the reason for this failure was the

> unredeemed mediocrity of the Castilian ruling class at a moment when the highest gifts of statesmanship were required. [It] lacked the breadth of vision and the strength of character to break with a past that could no longer serve as a reliable guide to the future . . . At a time when the face of Europe was altering more rapidly than ever before, the country that had once been its leading power proved to be lacking the essential ingredient for survival—the willingness to change.[4]

The failure to adjust itself to the new reality and to create a modern centralised state which was then needed was partly due to the unwillingness of the Spaniards to draw on experience abroad. This had its roots in the hostility to values and ideas in the heretical part of Europe (to which there is no parallel in the present circumstances). It would be doubly ironic if the situation faced by present-day Britain should make it necessary for some future historian to write similar words about 20th-century Britain's failure to adjust through unwillingness to change.

The question of "readjustment" is of course different for 20th-century Britain than for 17th-century Spain, but still it is a problem of change. Productivity and scientific-technological progress are now such dynamic problems in comparison with the relatively static agricultural economies in the past that it is unlikely that, even if Britain were not to enter the Common Market, the detrimental effects would be as long-lasting as those which followed the Spanish failure in the seventeenth century. Yet, as *The Economist* (10 July) stressed, the economic consequences of non-entry may be serious for a country so dependent on international trade as Great Britain:

> At the time of France's first veto in 1963, Britain's leading technological firm was Rolls-Royce. The failure to enter Europe in 1963 doomed it to trying to live on penny packets of orders throughout the next decade. When the opportunity for a big order came at last, it felt that it had to seize it, even for a risky product on the most disadvantageous terms. If we do not enter Europe, it can be prophesied with sickening assurance that Rolls-Royce's fate is only too liable in the 1970s to overtake our remaining major computer manufacturer, our remaining stake in major aircraft and aerospace manufacture, and that other British technological leaders will slowly relapse towards the lower range of their capabilities (so that ICI will become more of a paint firm, and less

[4] J. H. Elliot, *Imperial Spain*, 1469-1716 (1963).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> of a trail-blazer of chemical revolution). In America, Japan, and Western Europe the growth industries of the next two decades are going to be, first, the knowledge-based industries, springing up through this computer age; and, secondly, the producers of urban systems and pioneers of urban development. . . . A Britain that stays outside Europe's potential market of 290 million people will miss this tide, just as it missed the last one. . . . These are the probable realities of the economic threats before us, or at any rate before our children. They are at least more likely than it would have seemed in 1958 to say that we would have fallen by now to an urban Italian's standard of life. Any anti-European politician . . . who talks instead of the danger of ½ per cent on the annual cost of living index, or about New Zealand cheese, or about Caribbean sugar, will be seen, in history, as the most inconsequential ass.

The loss of the Mediterranean and American trade contributed significantly to the decline of 17th-century Spain. This time it is not a question of the ethnocentric, narrow-minded Spanish grandees despising manual labour and mercantile motives, but the stick-in-the-mud insularity of so many British trade-unionists which is a threat to foreign trade prospects and which lessens the nation's capacity to adapt itself to new circumstances and situations. Their real objection to going into Europe has nothing to do with the actual terms of entry, but like that of their Tory anti-Marketeer counterparts, is rooted in their conservatism, ignorance, and xenophobia. It is rationalised in "socialist" and "progressive" language, but it provides the ground on which the two meet, an auspicious ground for the fossilised mentalities of a Douglas Jay and of a Gerald Nabarro.

THE POST-WAR CHANGE in the international situation in which European countries were no longer able to play an important or even independent role in world politics led to the emergence of the "European idea." The initial step in its implementation was the formation of the Europe of Six. It provided a prospect that European countries might eventually reach a position from which they could influence historical developments and not merely be the objects of the antagonisms and agreements of the Super-Powers. Now that the waning of American influence increases the uncertainty about American protection—now that the bi-polar world of the two Super-Powers is slowly giving way to a multilateral balance of power in the world—now that it is clear (even without President Nixon's visit to Peking) that China and Japan will sooner or later play a major role in it, it is no less obvious that individual European countries will not be able to play any such role. If they want to have any say in the decisions which will in future influence their interests and their destinies—and ultimately the fate of European civilisation itself—they have to pool their resources economically and politically by voluntarily sharing their sovereignties in a world where the sovereignty of a small country often equals its impotence. It was after all, as George Thomson, the unfortunate Labour spokesman for Europe, wrote in *The World Today* (July 1971), the bitter practical experience of the limitations of British power in the modern world, suffered by successive British governments, which led both the Tory and Labour governments to apply for membership of the Common Market. Or, as *The Times* (8 July) put it: "Ever since the War—and one could certainly trace the process back further than that—the situation of Britain has been one of narrowing opportunity." In the words of the White Paper the decision against entry would signify that "in a single generation we should have renounced an imperial past and rejected a European future." This, as *The Times* rightly said, "would be a sort of suicide, a turning away from the challenge of life and a withdrawal into the supposed security of rigor mortis."

Even if this remark has to be taken only metaphorically, there seems little doubt that such a course would contribute to a further decline of Great Britain. The role it would at long last have found would be to become the "backwater of Europe." Are there pains in readjustment? They are likely to be far less severe than the pains of non-adjustment. The former will be temporary, the latter permanent. And, in the long run, the chances of the recovery of Europe (and not only of its Western part) depend on the successful accomplishment of the process of renaissance where, and when, it appears possible.

ANDREW SHONFIELD: On Finding a Role

PART OF THE REACTION in Britain against the European Market is, I think, due to the way in which the public here has for too long been subjected to the technique of the soft sell. It has constantly been told that it was not necessary to think about this constitutional problem or that problem of foreign policy: the great thing was to be pragmatic and confine our thoughts to the immediate and explicit commitments that had to be undertaken by a signatory of the Treaty of Rome. It has become clearer than ever with the passage of time that it really is not like that. The obligation which is implicit in the act of joining the European Economic Community is a very long

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

term one and a very open-ended one. It amounts to an agreement to seek systematically for ways of working together with a particular group of West European countries over a steadily widening range of public policy affecting both our domestic life and our international relations. However limited the progress which the EEC has actually made in this direction so far, it is no use pretending that the objective is anything else than to erode the frontiers of the Nation-State, and to reduce each nation's capacity to make separate decisions without consulting the interests and wishes of its partners in the group. The advantage that we hope to gain in the process is of course that these other nations will, in turn, be especially sensitive to British interests and adapt their domestic arrangements to take some account of these.

One thing which follows is that if Britain is to be effective as a member of this group, and not act as a constant drag on policies which involve increased spending on common purposes, its economic performance must be decisively improved. We have got to grow faster. Simply joining the EEC will not by itself ensure that we have an annual increment of several hundred million pounds more in our wealth, which would allow us to become an active partner in the promotion of social and political policies, at home and abroad, which cost more money. The economic argument for membership of the EEC starts from the recognition that we do not know precisely how an acceleration in the pace of economic growth is brought about. What we do know is that when a country has for a long period —in Britain's case for more than half a century— been growing pretty consistently at a slower pace than its industrial competitors in Western Europe, then the causes of this unsatisfactory performance are probably deeply ingrained in the national way of life. It is no use looking merely to economic gadgetry, in the form of improved tax arrangements or changes in external tariffs or investment incentives, to remedy them. The likelihood is, after all, that a large part of our institutional structures are adapted to the expectation of a relatively slow pace of economic change. That is why there is such promise in the pressures for institutional adaptation that will come from our future partners in the Common Market, whose economies and social systems are moulded to the expectation of a more rapid pace of change. This is something to look forward to.

THE PROCESS itself will not necessarily be either pleasant or frictionless. But many of us have, quite independently of the Common Market issue, come to think that a drastic acceleration in the pace of change in this country is overdue. The difference which the Common Market will make is that we shall now be under stronger political and social pressures to adopt new ways faster. It will become more difficult to delay a change in industrial organisation while management and trades unions muddle through a series of unofficial strikes towards some imprecise arrangement which binds everyone "not to rock the boat" too much. There will for example have to be much more precision about vocational standards—the necessary skills giving a worker the right of entry to jobs and professions—if all the citizens of the community are to have equality of treatment as employees, regardless of their nationality. A lot of gentlemen's agreements will be found wanting in this changed political climate. It is not only the "custom and practice" of organised labour on the shop floor which will be under pressure; the comfortable ways of small industrial management and of many of the professions are also likely to be subject to disturbance.

Lest all this seems to be suggesting that Britain and British ways will be the only things subject to the pressures of adaptation to common standards, let me say something about the effects of British membership on the other partners in the EEC. The fundamental criticism that can be made of the Community at present is that the legitimate demands made by the outside world upon it are by now far beyond the decision-making capacity of the EEC. The technocratic method of coping with problems of common policy served the Community well during its first phase, which involved the rapid construction of a customs union and a common agricultural policy. I think it is unlikely that Britain would have found this phase of the politics of the Community congenial, had this country been a member from the start.

The method was just about tolerable during the phase when the Community was constructing itself, and the officials responsible for this effort were able to refer back to the sacred text of the Rome Treaty for authority for their actions. But the Community has not been an effective organisation in the wider context of international relations. Its inefficiency derives in large part from the fact that none of the member states have so far been willing to hand over any significant authority in the field of external relations to a common organisation—whether it is the European Commission or some other body. The way in which this can slow down the process of international bargaining on wider issues became very apparent during the marathon trade negotiations of the Kennedy Round in Geneva, 1964-67. The whole of that operation in fact depended on the initiative and determination of the United States.

That has been true of so many of the important innovative developments in international economic relations during the past twenty years. The Americans have made the running. Moreover these important advances, although often concerned with economic and financial matters, have had profound political implications affecting the foreign policies of the states of the Western world.

One is led to ask—who, if anyone, will take comparable initiatives in international relations during the 1970s and 1980s? Judged by recent form, it would be sanguine to rely on the Americans to maintain the initiatives leading to freer trade and a more rational system of international money during the period ahead. The European

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Economic Community, especially once it is enlarged by the inclusion of Britain, has far bigger monetary reserves than the United States, conducts much more trade and has a more rapid rate of economic growth. Will it be able to supply the continuing drive towards a more rationally ordered world economy that has hitherto come chiefly from the Americans?

THE ANSWER depends, in my view, chiefly on whether the Community itself can achieve a more rational form of political organisation, which will allow its member states to repose greater trust in the decisions that it will be asked to make on their behalf. The EEC must, if it is to fulfil its international mission, move well beyond the technocratic structure which has dominated the first phase of its existence. Just as the British would have found this phase awkward to live with, they should be the people who will have most to give in the political construction required for the next phase of the Community.

Two things are necessary for this. One is effective parliamentary institutions, and the other is that these should work upon a strong executive body. Once one has identified such needs as these, it ceases to be a surprise that existing members of the Common Market, led by the Dutch but with the active support of most of the others, are so eager to bring the British into the partnership. Certainly if the British do not get in this time, the prospects for the construction of a political Europe, for which the customs union of The Six established in the 1960s was to be only the prologue, will be bleak.

IT IS THE APPARENT LACK of concern with this perspective on international relations that has been one of the disheartening aspects of the British debate on the Common Market. It has been all too reminiscent of the Warsaw boy in the international essay competition on Elephants who sent in a piece entitled "The Elephant and the Polish Question."

British interests, even on the narrowest definition, surely extend to the social and political health of this group of neighbours in Western Europe. Acting collectively they are going to be an extremely powerful group; acting separately they have a proved capacity to cause trouble for one another and for the rest of the world. It is too easy to make the assumption that the medium-sized West European nations no longer have the ability to make a serious nuisance of themselves, that the reason why they stay quiet, don't quarrel, and seek out ways of collaborating usefully with one another is that they have no other option.

One should, as a corrective, contemplate some less favourable scenarios for the 1970s and 1980s. We may, for example, face a slow-down in the growth of international trade, and then find that there is an almost overwhelming temptation for some nations to seize short-term national advantages at the expense of other countries, with a minimum regard for the long-term effects on international relations. Or one of the European countries might experience an outbreak of social unrest giving rise to an extreme nationalist movement with a violent xenophobe leadership which captures, say, 20% of the vote in one election—enough to form part of a coalition government which is then induced to make hostile gestures towards its neighbours. These are not major catastrophes; but they are, judging from our historical experience, events with a capacity to cumulate evil consequences. Unless they are effectively contained within a framework of established rules of international conduct, operated by nations committed to friendship towards one another, regardless of temporary deviations by one of their number, the frictions escalate. The style of international behaviour among the advanced Western industrial countries that we have come to take for granted would soon be eroded.

Now, it is not suggested that only the European Community could perform the task of containing the damage. Fortunately the world is by now equipped with a number of international organisations in which the Western nations have begun to learn to operate collective policies. But the European Community is special because it aims at the systematic extension of collective policies to an ever-widening range of international relations. It is a forum where the habit of collaboration will be more advanced. It will also be a kind of workshop where the new methods of collaboration appropriate to the changed problems and power relations of the contemporary world will be developed. Some of these methods will, hopefully, be adopted by others. But it is idle to expect that the changed attitudes that are required for this process of innovation will come into existence without a deliberate effort being undertaken by some group to curb the traditional pretensions of national sovereignty.

THE HISTORIC TASK of the European Community is to show how that can be done—while retaining the democratic rights and the material benefits of modern welfare societies. Hitherto we have depended on the power of well-conducted national states to secure both. So it is not surprising that the Europeans advance cautiously towards alternative arrangements. If they are intent on going forward, none the less, it is because they have been impressed by the inadequacies of the national state in the contemporary world and by the dangers of depending on the vagaries of national states for the conduct of international relations. The response is to establish a new kind of intermediary between the national states and the world system, and the European Community is to date the outstanding example.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Luigi Barzini

Risorgimento

Historical Reflections on the Making of Italy

ITALY is, in a conspicuous way, one of the oldest countries in the Western World. Where else can travellers find so many testimonies of successive, almost overlapping, civilisations, such an abundance of mossy ruins, tombs, temples, cathedrals, crumbling castles, decaying palazzi, and stupendously convoluted Baroque churches? Where are the museums more numerous and more replete with unquestioned masterpieces? The burden of history has visibly bent the very character of the people: they follow traditions and superstitions whose origins and significance are lost in the mists of the past; they are wary, wise, patient, resigned, pliable, ingenuous, and deeply pessimistic. Besieged by the treachery of life, each man diffidently trusts only himself (his immediate family and his clan, when need be) and indifferently uses whatever alliance, weapon, or stratagem comes in handy, legal if possible or illegal if necessary, to achieve his end.

It is an equally well-known fact that Italy is also one of the youngest nation-states of the pre-World War I vintage. Even the United States, whose proverbial youth, as someone said, is its oldest tradition, is almost a century older. Much older too are the Latin American republics, the kingdom of Greece, and even artificial and gerrymandered Belgium. Only prewar Germany, the *Kaiserreich,* was born a little later. It is understandable therefore that Italians as political animals should sometimes show all the traits of generous, impatient, but inexperienced youth. They can be easily fired by pubescent enthusiasms for raw ideologies which promise to exorcise all kinds of devils; are often swept from their torpor by storms of primitive collective emotion; are willingly bamboozled by the right sort of charlatans, and, as a result, persistently end up the victims of catastrophes.

The process by which Italians belatedly conquered freedom from foreign domination, unity under one law and one government, relative liberty for the people, and a cautious parliamentary regime is known as the Risorgimento. The now familiar word sounded suspiciously literary, rhetorical and ambiguous to our great-grandfathers' ears. It roughly means resurrection or revival. Revival of what, they asked, when the country had never been one, free, and independent before? The Risorgimento was, to begin with, the product of the *Zeitgeist,* primed, like similar movements all over Europe, by the ideas and example of the French Revolution. It was furthermore spurred on by the example of the "modern" régimes set up here and there in Italy by Napoleon, which had made the patriarchal and resigned way of life intolerable for a restless and energetic minority. The movement started, more or less, at the beginning of the century and was officially concluded in 1870, when the Italian army conquered the Pope's Rome.

THE DECISIVE YEARS, HOWEVER, were only two: 1859 and 1860. Within eighteen months all the moves had been precipitously made and the game won. In May 1859 the Italian map was roughly still the multicoloured harlequin coat of tiny kingdoms, principalities, foreign domains, and the Papal States it had always

LUIGI BARZINI *is the author of that classic study of national character, "The Italians" (1963), and is a regular contributor to* ENCOUNTER. *His most recent article was "Letter from Italy" (August 1970). His present article forms the introduction to Edgar Holt's "The Making of Italy: 1815-1870" (Atheneum, New York). Barzini's latest book, entitled "From Caesar to the Mafia", was published this spring by Hamish Hamilton (London) and the Library Press (New York).*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been. On October 26, 1860, Giuseppe Garibaldi met King Victor Emmanuel at Teano, near Naples. Garibaldi had landed in Sicily with his handful of Red Shirts in May and had fought and marched his way north; on September 11 the King of Sardinia had marched south from Lombardy (which he had freed with the help of his French allies the year before) at the head of the regular army, crossing century-old frontiers and defeating half-hearted hostile forces on the way. Garibaldi greeted him with the famous words: "I salute the first King of Italy." The job was practically done, even if Venice and Rome had yet to be won and two or three wars to be fought.

Deceptive Analysis

THOUGHTFUL ITALIANS and foreign observers immediately asked themselves (and have been asking ever since) two questions: why so late and why, once things started rolling, so unbelievably fast? What factor, or combination of factors, had retarded the Italians so many centuries? Why did they not achieve unity when England, Spain, France, Portugal, Sweden, Russia, and others had achieved it, at the point in history when unity had obviously been a forward step toward a more efficient government? Why had such a pragmatic, lively, and inventive people, who had led Europe in practically all fields, including politics, and who had created, experimented with, and speculated about new forms of government, been left so far behind by more stolid and unimaginative northerners?

And how could such a modest minority of patriots finally achieve their goal in such an incredibly short period of time in front of such overwhelming odds? Why did the old régimes—some of which, like the Tuscan Grand Duchy, were beloved by the majority of their subjects—vanish like ghosts? Why did some rulers surreptitiously abandon their capitals with resigned acquiescence? Why did some of their armies, a few of which were well trained and equipped, crumble away in front of inferior and sometimes amateur enemies? How was the hostility of the greater number neutralised, for a few short months anyway? Why did the European powers, which had intervened so energetically in Italian affairs for centuries, do nothing, or very little, to save the *status quo?*

These are by no means otiose questions to interest provincial historians or diligent compilers of Ph.D. theses. They have a momentous importance in today's affairs. Italian political thinkers and politicians (here, as elsewhere, the two categories seldom coincide) have worried about practically nothing else for more than one hundred years. In fact, parties struggling for power today can be distinguished also by their differing conceptions of what happened (or should have happened) in the nineteenth century. Most problems are still those left unsolved by the founding fathers, who were prevented from tackling them by their partial conceptions of Italian society and the precipitous speed of their success. Parliamentary speeches and newspaper articles about the burning issues of today (relations of Church and State, the regions, reform of the bureaucracy, schools, and universities, modernisation of the laws, and the moral, social, and economic advance of the working class, among them) could, with the change of a few paragraphs, have been pronounced or written fifty, seventy, or ninety years ago. They can be classified roughly as defences *à tout prix* of the Risorgimento's ideals and achievements, posthumous vendettas against its triumphant heroes, attempts to analyse and correct its failures and omissions, or efforts to bring it to its ultimate consequences and to gather its ultimate fruits.

OBVIOUSLY, THE NEW ITALIAN STATE, whose birth had been hindered (or observed indifferently and incredulously) by such a large majority of the population and retarded by such a concurrence of powerful forces for hundreds of years, could not help being fragile and almost ungovernable. It had been hurriedly put together by the intelligence and passion of a handful of men, the incredible heroism and self-sacrifice of many, but also fortuitous circumstances, flukes, astute stratagems, and dubious deals. Furthermore, the minority which had promoted it was itself fragmented, each faction working against the others for diametrically different Risorgimentos. The result could not help being a tree with shallow roots which looked majestic and awe-inspiring in good weather but which could be toppled over (and was) by any strong wind of history.

It is a fact that Italy's weakness and the Italians' restlessness have contributed to the insecurity of Europe; they have increased (and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presumably will increase) international confusion and turmoil. Take one example: the collapse of the liberal parliamentary régime in 1922 allowed the adventurer Mussolini to fill the vacuum and "make the trains run on time." The Fascist dictatorship started a series of chain reactions which facilitated, to say the least, the outbreak of World War II. Obviously analogous factors are still at work today. The present impotence of the political élite, incapable of reforming the state administration, setting up an efficient government, and tackling urgent problems, might offer the Communists a chance to join the government in alliance at first with the Catholic party and the Socialists, later to use their new position to conquer absolute power as they have done elsewhere and as their doctrine commands. This development might, presumably, provoke critical shifts in the balance of power in the Mediterranean, all of Europe, and eventually the rest of the world.

PRAGMATIC FOREIGN EXPERTS (who ignore the antecedents) must decide their interventions in Italian affairs on the basis of deceptive analogies with other countries, usually with unsatisfactory and disappointing results. Take, for instance, the handling of the Italian problem by Woodrow Wilson at Versailles in 1919; or, more recently, the heavy-handed manipulation of the Italian internal situation by the Kennedy advisers, as described by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in his book *A Thousand Days*. What else can these well-intentioned but ill-informed foreigners do? Read Italian books on the Risorgimento? This is an almost impossible undertaking. Studies dedicated to the period fill vast libraries. To be sure, a score of good books are authoritative compendia, but too summary to provide the data necessary to evaluate contemporary repercussions.

The majority are dedicated to one short episode, one controversial man or group of men, one military campaign or battle, one obscure decision; or patiently follow one single ideological thread through the intricate web. Inevitably, like historians everywhere, each Italian scholar consciously or unconsciously tries to prove a point, destroy a school of competitors, grind an axe, demonstrate the validity of one thesis, glorify one party, one idea, or one hero dear to his heart. In fact, most of them have been surreptitiously fighting the polemical battles of their day. Only the man who already knows almost everything can read these books with some profit, but he too is human and is often tempted to look for the confirmation of his prejudices rather than the unvarnished and often disagreeable truth.

Two Questions

THE VERY FRAGILITY of the final construction frightened official historians until a few years ago. In order not to rock the boat, they felt it their duty to hide unpleasant facts among the footnotes. Their version (the official version for decades) was a combination of hagiography and *images d'Epinal*. Among these are the Monarchists, for whom the Risorgimento was the crowning glory of the House of Savoy's almost millennial history and could not have succeeded without two far-seeing and heroic Kings, Charles Albert and his son Victor Emmanuel, and the *liberali* (of whom Cavour, the forerunner of a new modern middle class, was the only artifex). Then, of course, there were and are the Republicans (who believe nothing could have been achieved without Mazzini's tireless activity and the generous but disastrous plots of the Giovine Italia).

The Marxists call the Risorgimento the "revolution of the rich," who supported the royal conquest of Italy as the lesser evil, in order to forestall a popular uprising. The non-Marxists answer that the popular masses were reactionary anyway, unready for power, uninterested in unity and liberty, and that even the "bourgeois class" did not yet exist as it had existed in France in 1789. There are Nationalists and Anti-nationalists, who isolate with pride or horror the germs of aggressive imperialistic ambitions in the confused ideals of the time; Romantics, who see the movement as an adventurous epic, with Giuseppe Garibaldi cast as the leading man; and the Cosmopolitans, for whom the Risorgimento is mainly the local aspect of the general revolution of nineteenth-century Europe, provoked by the development of industries, the building of railroads, the increase in trade, and the progress of ideas. Finally, there are the Catholics, who believed and still believe the whole thing was a mistake from beginning to end, particularly the end.

It must be borne in mind that most of these

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

historians are right. Their studies are, as a rule, diligently documented and based on a careful selection of authentic data, even the studies of the few reactionary and legitimist writers (who believe the Risorgimento was ruthlessly engineered by a handful of unscrupulous men who violated national, international, and divine laws and brutally forced unity on a reluctant people) and of the sceptics, who think that the movement was merely the beginning of a laborious process which must still be completed, and that "Risorgimento" was a premature misnomer. As Massimo d'Azeglio said in 1861, "Italy is made. Let us now make the Italians."

TO AVOID GETTING LOST in this jungle, the foreign reader (as well as the rare Italian whose mind is still to be made up) must try to follow a reliable guide. Among the best are foreign historians. Curiously (or inevitably) enough, from the beginning the clearest panoramas were put together by non-Italians. Their books still provide balanced and fair-minded digests of the Italians' immense scavenging work among documents.[1]

Cool-headed foreign historians see the Risorgimento not as a unique event but as the Italian version of several more or less contemporary movements in Europe. They almost always manage not to get involved in controversies, do not join Italian parties, do not go in for hypothetical history (or for speculation about what would or should have happened *if only . . .*). The Anglo-Saxons, in particular, are rarely tied to the Procrustes' bed of rigid ideologies and do not flinch when faced with the incoherence and contradictions of reality. A really good foreign book on the Risorgimento is the equivalent of miles of bookshelves loaded with specialised and partisan Italian studies. It is a time-saving device.

Even in the most balanced and best-documented foreign books, however, one looks in vain for simple and satisfying answers to the two questions mentioned above: Why So Late and Why So Fast? The main reason for this, of course, is that simple answers are seldom satisfying. Like all momentous developments, the Risorgimento was an intricate confluence of many currents; some of its primal sources have still to be recognised and explored; its course is not entirely known; it was enriched along its sluggish way by a number of secondary streams, until in the end it became an apparently irresistible force. The answers are therefore multiple, sometimes contradictory, and often confusing. Some I endeavour to suggest in the following pages, not so much to illuminate the reader as to give him a glimpse of the intricacy and scarcely charted vastness of the field, hence of the extreme difficulties of understanding contemporary Italian political life.

Machiavelli to Mazzini

WHY, to begin with, So Late? Down the centuries, from the early Middle Ages on, a small number of Italians never suspected Italy did not exist. It existed well enough for them. They were humanists, writers, poets, essayists, philosophers, scientists, painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, and so forth. To be sure, each of them was the son of his native province, the loyal subject of whatever prince ruled it, believed its local cuisine and customs superior to all others, and thought nothing of having to get a passport to travel a few miles from home. Each of them spoke, like everybody else, the local patois. Italian was a stiff, rhetorical, and courtly language, to be written but seldom pronounced, as Latin had been for centuries.

At the same time, each of them thought of himself as the proud citizen of one of the great countries of Europe, the mother of arts and laws, an ideal Italy. Its capital was Rome, not the stone-and-brick village on the muddy banks of the Tiber, where palazzi, basilicae, and the majestic ruins of the past emerged from the green farms and the hovels of the illiterate poor, but a splendid metropolis of the spirit. For centuries poets lamented the weaknesses, divisions, ruins, shame, and misery of their country, overrun and oppressed by foreigners, and reminded their countrymen of

[1] Among the first biographies of Camillo Cavour, for example, are those by a Prussian, Heinrich von Treitschke, in 1869; an American, William Roscoe Taylor, in 1911; and a Frenchman, Maurice Paléologue, in 1929. (Italians have dedicated painstaking efforts to reporting one or another period of Cavour's life in great detail, mostly his youth.) Englishmen wrote the best lives of Giuseppe Mazzini: Bolton King (1912) and E. E. Y. Hales (1956); of Giuseppe Garibaldi: G. M. Trevelyan (1907, 1909, and 1911) and Denis Mack Smith (1957). The only life of Pius IX is by E. E. Y. Hales. Finally, the best compendia of the whole period, warts and all, are by Bolton King (1899) and Denis Mack Smith (1968).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

past greatness to awaken their pride and patriotism. The catalogue of such lamentations is long, from Dante to Leopardi, and familiar to all students of Italian literature. When, at the end of the eighteenth century, the idea of the nation-state acquired vigour and spread through Europe, two *literati* were the first to sound the reveille in Italy: Vittorio Alfieri and Ugo Foscolo.

When the movement slowly gathered momentum, it was accompanied by a growing chorus of poems, songs, historical novels, tragedies filled with transparent allusions, operas, and a continuous flow of political tracts sometimes disguised as scholarly treatises. All this proves, if proof were needed, that the Risorgimento was principally (but not solely) a literary movement, the last development of an old literary trend, and was fought for almost exclusively by an élite, a moral and cultural élite and not necessarily, as the Marxists would like to believe, a class élite. In fact, the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, the landowners, and the wealthy were deeply divided, almost all the peasants opposed it, and only a small minority of the industrial workers, mostly artisans, participated in the struggles.

It had to be an eccentric élite because for centuries the vast majority of Italians (and the *literati* themselves in their quieter moments) knew that national unity and independence were irrelevant to their daily lives. History had taught them that nothing could really cure their ills and modify the immutable substance of things under the mutable appearances. Changes, of course, occurred continually. As the Prince of Salina's nephew said to his uncle, in Giuseppe di Lampedusa's *The Leopard*,

> "A lot of things must change in order that everything remain the same."

But the people knew that wars, revolutions, new partitions of Italy, new dynasties, new flags, new uniforms, new constitutions had never successfully exorcised the national curse. "Dress them as you wish," said a King of Naples sadly to his son, who was showing him a battalion of soldiers with a newly designed uniform, "they will always run away."

ITALIANS ADAPTED THEMSELVES to their fate. They preferred to rely on the consolations of religion, their personal power, their friends, family solidarity, rather than on the faceless and omnipotent machinery of a great unified monarchy. As tyrants went, many weak, inept, and dispersed ones were better than a single powerful one. As a result, the people looked upon the *literati* asking for a resurrection of Italy as rhetoricians who knew little about real life. And had not all attempts to unify the country under one government failed in the past? Even the Romans had not succeeded; the Lombards' attempt under Hardouin (955-1015 A.D.) came to nothing; Charles V was crowned both Holy Roman Emperor and King of Italy in Bologna in 1530, but he never actually reigned over a united kingdom; Napoleon placed on his head, in the Cathedral of Milan, the "iron crown" of Monza, which had been Hardouin's and Charles's, saying in faltering Italian, "God has given it to me: Woe to him who touches it." But his reign was short; after his fall, Joachim Murat, King of Naples, marched north with his army, calling all Italians to his flag in a wild effort to unify the country, but was defeated at Tolentino by the Austrians. The patriots naturally pointed out that the diffident attitude of the vast majority might have been one of the causes, perhaps the decisive one, of all these failures, if one excludes the ever present possibility of a supernatural influence like *jettatura*.

WHAT IS CERTAIN is that the mechanism which had been useful to produce unity in other great European nations never really functioned in Italy. This was feudalism, which never took durable roots south of the Alps except in Piedmont, where it had been imposed by an alien princely house, the Dukes of Savoy. To be sure, Italians were enthusiastically addicted to its more spectacular aspects, which they not only adopted but also greatly improved—the elaborate titles, the ornate appearance of power, the elegantly designed coats of arms, the etiquette, the jousts and tournaments. But the people as a whole were never deeply permeated with the moral essence of feudalism, the virtues of chivalry, fealty for one's legitimate lord and loyalty toward one's peers, the defence of the weak, and the medieval idea of honour. There is no Italian poem of chivalry comparable to the *Chanson de Roland* or the *Morte d'Arthur*. Fewer knights from Italy fought in the Crusades, the ultimate test of medieval

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ideals, than from other parts of Christendom. In fact, many Italians made money leasing boats to the Crusaders, and the Venetians employed the foreigners' holy enthusiasm to conquer commercial beachheads in the East. Lacking a strong feudal ladder, no princely house could climb to the summit, no great and feared lord could emerge as the *primus inter pares,* to enforce a truce among the barons and to represent national unity

Another factor was perhaps more important than the absence of a feudal structure and a feudal mentality: the presence in Rome of the Holy Catholic Church. The Church was (and still is) a spiritual organisation reaching to the end of the known world; it dominated all Christendom before the Reformation; but, at the same time, it always was a worldly political force playing very human politics to defend and promote its power and influence. In fact, it believed (as some churchmen still believe) itself to be the only organisation fitted to govern the whole world, according to the doctrine stated once and for all in the thirteenth century by Blessed Giacomo Capocci da Viterbo, an Augustinian monk, professor at the Sorbonne, later Archbishop of Naples: "*Nulla communitas dicitur vera res publica nisi ecclesiastica, quia in ea sola est vera justitia et vera utilitas et vera communis,*" or, in a rough translation: "No community can call itself a real commonwealth unless it is governed by the Church, because only in it is real justice, real efficiency, and true defence of common interests." The instruments by which the Curia could enforce its will were, particularly in Italy, its mediocre powers as a worldly principality, but, above all, the immense spiritual powers of the Holy See. It could excommunicate recalcitrant sovereigns, it could excommunicate whole governing bodies and interdict entire nations, which meant the prohibition of all public worship, of the administration of some sacraments, and of ecclesiastical burial. It could, by means of its spiritual powers, suborn the people against their legitimate authorities and incite them to revolt. The fact that the worldly *Realpolitik* was meant for the greater glory of God permitted the Church, at times, to employ base and disreputable schemes, often baser and more disreputable than those adopted by honorable princes.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN Church and State was always, for obvious reasons, sharper in Italy than anywhere else. It was sharpest during the Risorgimento. In the end, it seemed to Pius IX a synthesis of all current heresies, or, in his words, "the triumph of disorder and the victory of the most perfidious revolution." The fanaticism of the masses was fanned against the "patriots" (and later against the legitimate authorities of the new Kingdom). The Curia, the clergy, and the Jesuits in particular waged a relentless war against all new ideas. It was the Church's preoccupation with temporal power which made it prefer at all times a depraved and impious supporter of the Pope-King to an opponent who was a devout and God-fearing Catholic. The modern world was condemned in no uncertain terms by the Pope in his famous Syllabus of Errors, published in 1864. It listed eighty "erroneous propositions," among which were Rationalism, Socialism, Communism, Secret Societies (*lege* Masons), and any form of hostility against "the Roman Pontiff's civil princedom." Number 80 damned anybody who believed that "the Roman Pontiff can and should reconcile and harmonise himself with Progress, Liberalism, and Contemporary Civilisation." The Syllabus was misunderstood abroad and embarrassed Catholics everywhere because it was really meant only for Italy. In 1870, Victor Emmanuel was excommunicated, as well as his ministers, generals, high officials, collaborators, and all those who shared responsibility for secular legislation. Italian Catholics were encouraged to violate the laws of the kingdom, forbidden to vote in the elections, forbidden to send their children to state schools.

This confusion between the temporal and the spiritual spheres tended at all times to corrupt the Church and weakened the Italians' religious spirit. How could simple men distinguish between the divine community of the faithful, the "Mystical Body of Christ," and the too human structure in Rome, the "Visible Church," run by elderly bachelors with all the time on their hands to weave political intrigues and dubious deceptions? That the Church had been the main obstacle to the creation of an Italian state and the defence of the people's dignity was the belief of Renaissance writers. (The problem, of course, grew infinitely worse in the following centuries.) Machiavelli analysed it in this famous passage:

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> As many are of the opinion that the welfare of Italy is the product of the Roman Church, I want to dispute this idea by whatever arguments come to my mind, and will particularly use two mighty ones, which, according to me, cannot be contradicted. The first is that, on account of the examples set by the Roman Court, this country has lost all devotion and all religion, a state of things which provokes infinite aggravations and disorders, because, as it is a well-known fact that all good things may be found where there is religion, the contrary prevails where religion is absent. We Italians therefore owe the Church and the priests this, that we have become without religion and wicked. But we owe it and them something even more important, something which is the second cause of our ruin, the fact that the Church keeps this country divided. Truly no nation is ever united and happy if it does not come under the obedience of one republic or one prince, as it happened in France and Spain. The reason why Italy is not in the same condition is one: the Church, which, having its seat and wielding temporal power in this country, has never been powerful and brave enough to become its sovereign, but, on the other hand, was never weak enough not to be able, fearing for the loss of its temporal domains, to summon someone powerful to defend it against him who might have become too powerful in Italy. This sort of thing has often been seen of old, at the time when the Church, with the help of Charlemagne, expelled the Lombards who had almost united Italy under one crown; or when, in our times, it defeated the Venetians with the help of the French and subsequently drove out the French with the help of the Swiss.[2]

The Venetian army was defeated by the French, commanded by Louis XII, at Agnadello. The French were part of a League set up by the Pope to destroy the power of the Republic, which had antagonised the Church. On that day, 14 May 1509, the Venetians fought and died crying *"Italia, Italia, libertà, libertà!"* as if they knew (as Machiavelli believed) that they were defending not only their republic but Italy and Italian liberty.

The Time for Change

WHY, then, So Fast? The 1848-1849 war ended in total disaster. Charles Albert had hoped to defeat Austria, the main prop supporting the precarious structure of Italian principalities, with his army and the help of the revolutionaries who had risen here and there in Italy as they had risen that year all over Europe. He had been mistaken. A reappraisal of the Italian problem was debated, in the public prints and in Parliament at Turin, and in *caffè* conversations, secret meetings, and underground pamphlets everywhere else. Obviously the crushing defeats showed that the Piedmontese army was not strong enough by itself, the Piedmontese generals not *à la hauteur* of the task, and the "national revolution" not as overwhelmingly national and revolutionary as patriots had hoped and led the King to believe. The revolutionaries were eager young men, evidently consecrated to the cause, ready to die, but too few, isolated, and powerless to move the diffident and prudent multitudes.

In particular, they had shown themselves incapable of co-ordinated and realistic action; inept at conducting war or simple public affairs; and not even shrewd enough to exploit a revolutionary situation. Enthusiasm, noble sentiments, and errors had produced heroic martyrs, to be remembered in poems and marble monuments (both highly appreciated by Italians) as examples to the coming generations, but surely not lasting concrete results proportionate to the sacrifices. Thoughtful people agreed that, if there was to be a second attempt, both the conspirators and the Piedmontese army had to be helped by a powerful and experienced foreign ally who could—at the start, anyway—match its strength against Austria's. The problem, in other words, had become one to be solved with the aid of international diplomacy and intrigues.

IN THE YEARS AFTER 1848 a peaceful revolution had changed the rest of Europe and the reflections were increasingly felt in Italy. Italy had been for more than two centuries (since the Counter-Reformation, to be exact) a backwater *cul-de-sac* where new European philosophic and political fashions arrived late and usually distorted. This time, however, the novelties seeped south of the Alps sometimes in the form of new initiatives and ideas, but more often in the form of a growing sense of malaise and impotence. To be sure, many new things were done. Under Cavour's leadership, Piedmont energetically built railroads and factories, dug canals and a first tunnel under the Alps, began modernising agriculture, and encouraged international trade. But even the more inert and timid governments in the rest of the peninsula felt they had to do something.

[2] *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio. (Libro Primo), xii.*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They, too, launched a few steamships, built some industries, reclaimed marshland, and tried to abolish impediments to the free flow of goods.

All this was inevitably too little and too late. The Italians were as a whole among the most backward, miserable and illiterate people of Europe. It was impossible for them to bridge the gap of centuries in a few years. The comparison between exaggerated ideas of progress abroad and in Piedmont and the lethargic pace of improvements at home—the difference between hope and achievements—spread a growing resentment against things as they had always been. An increasing number of people —not only dreamers, poets, intellectuals, and revolutionaries this time, but also solid and realistic citizens—began to feel that the main obstacles to a better life were the decrepit state structures, the stupid restrictive laws, the crazy quilt of principalities, the obtuse bureaucracy, the Austrian influence, and the Church domination. These people were men of all classes and political opinions. There were, to be sure, among them, the *liberali*, the democrats, and the republicans, but now also provincial patriots, the resigned subjects of whatever prince they were born under; some of these men thought the only way to save the local throne was to modernise the administration, grant a constitution, and eventually form some sort of Italian *Zollverein* or federation, possibly under the leadership of the Pope.

THIS NEW FACT, of course, contains part of the answer to the question Why So Fast. In the ten years between 1849 and 1859 the élite of malcontents grew to enclose, in one way or another, a large section of the whole Italian élite, from the extreme left to the extreme right; even the reactionaries realised that, as the Duke of Cambridge is said to have remarked, "there is a time for everything, even for change, and the time for change is when it can no longer be resisted. . . ." Many, at the same time, were unhappy with the old ways but also frightened by the threat of revolution, as Gramsci has pointed out, because the ghost of Communism was beginning to haunt even backward and apathetic Italy. In the end everybody, particularly the solid majority which staunchly opposed the Risorgimento, was forced to choose the lesser among many evils.

Disenchantment

IT MUST BE REMEMBERED that Italians as a rule are realistic and intelligent; that they dislike braving unnecessary dangers when the odds are clearly against them; having been exposed to them for too many centuries, they are extremely sensitive to the coming changes in historic weather and like to prepare themselves and avoid unpleasant surprises. The moment the alliance between Piedmont and France became known, and when, later, the two allied armies defeated the Austrians at Solferino and San Martino, everybody (revolutionaries, patriots, moderates, conservatives, priests, laymen, and reactionaries) perhaps too hurriedly thought he knew how the game would end and saw no point whatever in going on with it, one dull and bloody move after the other. Everybody rearranged his life accordingly. The crowds cheered the winners, as they had always done. Individuals thought of ways to gain the winners' gratitude.

It was, for example, the last Minister of the Interior of King Francis II of Naples who met the conquering Garibaldi, coming from Sicily, at the Naples railroad station and sat by him in the carriage that brought him triumphally to the royal palace. (The King had retreated with what was left of his army to Gaeta, where he made a last brave stand.)

All the explanations of the Risorgimento which the patient reader could find in Italian studies are right. It is true that it was a revolution *manqué*; it lacked popular support; it could be achieved, in the end, only in one way —the conquest of Italy by Piedmont, which exploited the agitations of conspirators and the initiatives of revolutionaries. It was not exactly (as the Marxists like to believe) the "revolution of the rich" but surely the "revolution of those who wanted to be rich, if possible," of the more modern intellectuals and *entrepreneurs* who wanted to see Italy liberated from some of the political anachronisms which had kept it superstitious and hungry for centuries and, above all, isolated from the rest of Europe. It is also true that the Church fought the unification (or, at least, the form it took—the creation of a secular state) and tried later to weaken the new kingdom from the inside in many ingenious and dangerous ways. It is also true, finally, that the Risorgimento did not pay enough attention to the social problem. This

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cavour himself regretted before his death. But the masses were hostile, and the problems to be solved were so huge, numerous, pressing, and difficult that there was no time at first for anything else. It is true that the structure was fragile, sustained only by the selfless patriotism of one of the best political élites Italy had ever created, by rhetoric, and by some oppressive police measures.

IN THE END, as many historians now point out, the result pleased nobody. Starting from the Left, the revolutionaries, the Garibaldi followers, the Mazzini republicans resented the monarchy and its conservative policies. The *liberali* were bitterly disillusioned when the epic poetry of the Risorgimento turned into the shabby problems of politics. The southerners felt cheated by the northerners. The democrats were offended by the very limited number of citizens entitled to vote. The timid feared some of the modest liberties which had been granted to subversive elements. The nationalists despised the weak foreign policy and the inadequate appropriations for the armed forces. The internationalists deprecated the bold foreign policy and the excessive expenditures for the armed forces, which impoverished the already poor country, plunged into debt by the efforts made to unify itself and to tackle some of the most urgent tasks. The Church looked upon the whole thing as a devilish plot and kept the Catholic masses from participating and cooperating with the new authorities. The legitimists plotted the overthrow of the Savoys and the return of their old princes. The proletariat (the term arrived in Italy immediately after the Risorgimento) was easily subverted by the revolutionaries, the Church and the reactionaries and rose in sporadic and bloody revolts. In particular, the southern peasants and some dismissed Bourbon soldiers and officers, encouraged by the Vatican and the King of Naples in exile, fought a bloody guerrilla war against regular Italian troops in the 1860s which cost thousands more human lives than all the Wars of Independence.

Continuity and Surprise

THE LIFE OF UNITED ITALY has always been plagued by these defects of origin. It can be said that for the last hundred years many revolutions have always been boiling under the surface, revolutions of the Left and the Right, which erupted occasionally in times of stress. The problems are still all there, some of them magnified by neglect and by comparison with progress in other countries.

> Traditions of the old order [Bolton King wrote in 1899], poverty, ignorance, the influence of the clergy made the political education of the people a matter of slow and painful progress. Their spirit was often more consonant to despotism than to constitutional government; and the duties of citizenship . . . were sometimes regarded more as a burden than a privilege.

The only novelty is that today (as it happened in many other places) the old anti-liberal, anti-Risorgimento, subversive Right has died of obsolescence, giving birth to a large anti-liberal, anti-Risorgimento, subversive Left, recruited from more or less the same classes of underprivileged peasants, workers, and disgruntled intellectuals.

Power is no longer held only by the parties which created the unified liberal democratic state (with all its defects), the 20th-century heirs of the 19th-century ideals of liberty, the rule of law, and the Rights of Man. Power is mainly held by a coalition of the Christian Democrats, the secular arm of the Church, and the Socialists, with two minor and weaker partners, the Republicans and the Social Democrats. The policies pursued by the Centre-Left government try to face some of the ancient problems of the country according to the most fashionable formulas of the Left.

They have produced some results. Visible through the modern technocratic jargon of some of the speeches, however, are nostalgic remnants of the anti-Risorgimento: the preference for rule by men to the impartial application of the law, the belief that improvements must come from above, from the liberality of the prince, and not mainly through the industry of the people. The Church (either consciously or unconsciously, possibly only driven by the dynamics of its ideology) is dismantling the old unified secular state. The Church never believed in it, anyway. It again sought (as Machiavelli explained) the help of a powerful foreign ally, the United States of America, this time to fend off the Communist menace, which was considered extremely dangerous in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Now that the American alliance, for a number of reasons, has become embarrassing and burdensome, the Church is

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

slowly softening its approach to Communists, both in Italy and abroad, and possibly contemplating (or not excluding altogether) an alliance with them, with the hope of promoting not the prosperity and liberty of the people but the prosperity and the liberty of the Holy See. It must be remembered that the Pope has at times allied himself to the Sultan of Turkey in order to defeat his Christian enemies.

In spite of the immense difficulties, the fragility of the State, the contradictory policies of the parties in power, the accumulation of unsolved problems, the archaic bureaucracy, the stratification of Byzantine laws, Italy is making slow and steady progress. This phenomenon is puzzling foreign observers. There is no single explanation. Maybe it is because Italians have learned somehow to function under weak and inept governments; and prefer, in fact, a weak and inept government to a strong one which, as things stand today, would probably turn out to be a doctrinaire and impractical one. Perhaps they have always been at their best in times of strife, confusion, and chaos. It may also be that the Risorgimento was never completed, and that the unification and modernisation of Italy is still at its beginning, each generation slowly advancing toward the goal which some optimists thought had been triumphantly reached in 1870. Only an earnest study of what happened—and of what seemed to have happened, what did not happen, what should have happened—in the nineteenth century can offer some light on what is going on today and what might develop tomorrow.

At best, the diligent scholar can offer persuasive *ex post facto* explanations why Italians did not behave as all the experts expected.

© *Introduction copyright Luigi Barzini (1971)*

Sabbath Eve in Los Angeles

I wait in silence, ready, before the Sabbath
for the ramhorn bellow to butt its way
to me, through these Westwood hills
that shut my prayers off from the sea.

I look to Sunset Boulevard, winding
through the hills and my involuted ear canals
screeching with tyres and beeping horns,
waiting, worrying what's keeping it.

Has it met some accident among these gentle,
these sculptured, alien hills? Has it been swallowed
or penned or lost like me in the leaving
behind of the homeworld, seaworld, Sabbath silence?

Is it too hard, impossible, to hallow
time and silence stuffed with motors gunning?

This silence is not my place: fathers and sons
do not walk the streets to the synagogue.

I need like a seaconch to be pressed
to the ear of prayer, if, so far from my sea,
my home, I am to find an echo of the self
I left behind in coming to this other world.

I listen . . . I wait . . . I look . . . and I worry. The sun
is setting. The ramhorn is not rising against it.
Night and stars are walking the sky, alone.
No fathers and sons together find the synagogue.

Richard E. Sherwin

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Norman Levine

My Karsh Picture

IT WAS mid-January 1944. And I had returned to Ottawa from the West—having received a commission as a pilot officer—to spend a few weeks' embarkation leave at home before going over to England. My mother wanted to have a photograph taken so she could be left with a picture when I went overseas. And the man to take your photograph, if you lived in Ottawa, was Karsh.

Though Karsh at that time was not quite the internationally known figure he is today, he had already established himself among the wealthy and influential people in Ottawa. Whenever I went to my uncle's on the Driveway, there was his Karsh picture on the mantel in the living-room, as there were of my aunts and cousins. And though Karsh did not, I imagine, charge then as much as he charges now, whatever he did charge was still more than my parents could afford.

The Jewish community in Ottawa's Lower Town was small and provincial, but it had a well-organised grapevine. My parents soon got wind that the person who did all the touching-up at Karsh's, a refugee, sometimes took private sitters, in the evenings, and could produce photographs like those of Karsh for a fraction of the price.

My mother arranged an appointment. And I went out on a freezing night to meet the toucher-upper in the Honey Dew on Sparks Street. His name I have forgotten (I'll call his Lou). But I remember him as a tall, thin man with a sallow complexion and a melancholy look on his face; and he had thin, straight, sandy hair. He had with him a short roly-poly amiable man called Zhavel, also a refugee, who was to act as his assistant. During the day Zhavel worked for a tailor on Metcalfe Street. We walked over to the Arcade and the tall man looked furtively around before taking some keys out of his pocket and opening the door of Karsh's studio.

I HAD NEVER SEEN so much equipment before. Wires, reflectors, lights, tripods, venetian blinds, drapes—it looked like my idea of a Hollywood set. I took off my coat (I was dressed in a brand-new pilot officer's uniform). I had some cold cream put on my forehead. I combed my hair. And the toucher-upper, Lou, posed me on a small raised platform, holding my gloves in one hand, arm bent, elbow on my knee, a spotlight behind me to give the Karsh halo outline. I faced the camera.

Zhavel was holding up a light, standing on a chair, a short distance to my left, so that half of my face was in shadow, the other blinded. I could see he was standing fully stretched—his trousers were at half mast. Lou looked in the camera, black hood over his head, did some adjusting, and put in a plate. Then, holding a rubber bulb in his hand, he came close to me, to the shadow side, and said, like the maestro:

"You like flying?"

"Yes," I said.

"Fine. Now imagine this. Imagine you are flying over Germany. And a battle that will decide the future of mankind is being fought in the skies. It is simply terrible. Stukas are diving. Parachutes are everywhere. You are turning, firing. You are coming out of a dive. It is terrible. Planes are breaking up like little toys, bits go by your face. But you are determined to live. You *look* determined. Look determined, *please*."

I tried to look determined. I was eighteen. And all my flying so far had been done in Tiger Moths and Ansons over stretches of prairie and foothills in Alberta.

"Got him?" Zhavel said from the chair. "I can't hold this light much longer."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yah," Lou said. But he didn't sound very enthusiastic.

Zhavel put his light down on the chair. And they had a huddle by the camera. I could hear bits of conversation. "—he's a stoneface. . . . What can you do? Let me try. . . ."

So Zhavel took hold of the bulb. And Lou climbed up on the chair to take charge of the light.

"Now," Zhavel said from somewhere to my left, slowly and intimately. "There is a beautiful girl. And you are very tired. You have fought forty times today. The ack-ack has made mince-meat of all your friends. You are fed up with war and all that business. And you are alone in your tent. And she comes in. She is wearing negligible clothes. And. . . ."

"Zhavel, he's too young."

"If he's old enough to get killed he's old enough for this—she comes close to you and kisses you gently on the lips and says. . . ."

"Zhavel, I know his father."

"All right. You try something then. The guy's a stoneface. Not a crease."

LOU SAID NOTHING in reply. And Zhavel again took over. He changed his approach.

"Look. How would your mother like to remember you? You're dead, see! And all they've got is this picture hanging on the wall. Do you want to leave them a picture with no expression? Nothing to say thank you for all the things you've done for me all these years. Don't you want your mother and father to look at the picture and get some joy. Think of something happy."

"And double it," said Lou from behind the light. "You're not going to a funeral. Ask him about when he was a child."

"What was the first thing," Zhavel said, "you wanted to be. Think. Don't think too hard, but what was the first ambition?"

"I wanted to be," I said, "the man who swept the leaves from the street in the fall with a big broom and put them into a barrel with a shovel."

"And now you've become an officer."

"Zhavel, quit horsing around with philosophy," Lou said sharply.

"I'll tell him a joke then."

"Which one?"

"About Yossel."

"That one takes you half an hour."

"How about the salesman with the rubber goods on the farm?"

"That's an old-country joke—he's a Canadian boy."

They had another huddle. And when they came away from it Zhavel looked very sly.

"You are feeling miserable," he said gently. "You've got no money. Your girl friend has left you for your best friend. You have been in an accident and you have your legs and arms amputated, without anaesthetic. You have lost buckets of blood. And you've got a toothache. Life isn't worth living. . . ."

"It's no good," Lou said from the chair.

Suddenly Zhavel exploded. "*You're no good.* Your face is a cover. A garbage can. For what? I'll tell you. You're a liar. A rotten apple. A thief—I give up. The guy has only one expression."

"Cheese," I said.

"What, you like food?"

"As a matter of fact I do. But I thought you're supposed to say cheese before you have your picture taken."

"You like latkas?"

"Yes."

"You like smoked meat?"

"Yes."

"Well, you are alone with a plate of hot, juicy, smoked meat, lots of fat, and this beautiful girl and she is making latkas with nothing on. . . ."

He must have pressed the bulb then for the toucher-upper came down from the chair, and they had another long huddle around the camera.

WHEN IT WAS OVER, and I was putting on my coat, I asked Lou.

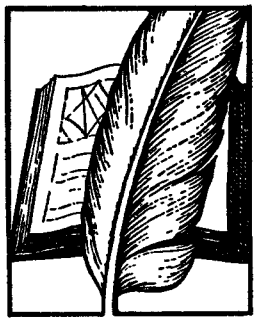
"Will it look like a Karsh?"

He led me to a room where in tanks filled with water were floating pictures of several Canadian and American generals, the Royal family, and the Pope.

"In two days you'll be floating there with them," he said.

Two months after the War ended I came back to Ottawa. The Karsh photograph was on the wall. There I was, gloves in one hand, halo behind my head. I heard that the toucher-upper had died of TB. No one knew what had happened to Zhavel.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Column

LOOKING AT contemporary works of art, more especially when they lay claim to be "advanced" or *avant-garde,* is for me very often a slightly disconcerting, and even unnerving, experience. To others it obviously is not, for today's art contrives to be both fashionable and popular. It commands high prices, and no self-respecting newspaper or magazine can afford to leave its readers uninformed about the latest and most way-out developments in the artistic world. Art, like music (though not apparently literature), is Pop, and thus in itself is a phenomenon of considerable cultural significance; though I find it difficult to agree with those who believe that this means we have returned to those days when a new painting by Duccio could appear "sheer miracle to the multitude," or a medieval cathedral embody the deepest feelings of the masses. It may merely mean that, in making itself instantaneously accessible to all, art has simply divested itself of all those attributes with which it has been associated, and for which it has been valued, in the past. For these attributes implied that there was always something withheld and impenetrable in the work of art, except to the eye of the beholder both willing and able to undertake the patient and sometimes difficult task of unravelling its mystery.

Contemporary art, however, in its advanced forms assumes that the difficulty has been abolished with the mystery. Its effect is immediate and instantaneous, like an assault by storm troops, to such an extent indeed that the work of art may be considered as in a certain sense expendable and is a matter for and of the moment only. And we can see this very clearly, for instance, in certain exhibitions of modern sculpture in which the objects exposed to view could quite easily be dismantled and reassembled or returned to the scrapyard or the rubbish dump, or simply swept up off the floor.

It is indeed their instantaneous quality, not their difficulty but their immediate comprehensibility, which gives many contemporary works of art the shock effect at which they aim; only perhaps the shock is not entirely of the kind that was intended. It induces a slightly queasy feeling, as if one suffered from vertigo or had lost one's sense of balance, simply because one persists in looking for something in the work of art which is not there and is not meant to be there, whose very absence indeed may form the most significant element in the work in question. This sense is intensified, in a highly disconcerting way, because once the effect of novelty has worn off (and mere novelty never lasts for long) only too often one recognises in what *is* present a last late recrudescence of a stale and lifeless academic tradition.

PERHAPS, HOWEVER, I have said enough to show that on this subject my ideas are not as clear or coherent as one would like them to be. Others, one would guess, must find themselves in the same position, at least if one is to judge by much of the art criticism with which one is presented in such profusion at the present time. I was therefore delighted to find in a recent edition of *Art International* (published in Lugano) an article by Clement Greenberg which, under the title of "Counter-Avant-Garde", seems to me to throw a good deal of light on some of the most difficult problems inspired by contemporary art.

Perhaps I should say at once that the light is not a very sympathetic one. The tone of Mr Greenberg's article is admirably expressed by the quotation from Goethe's *Venezianische Epigramme* with which he prefaces it:

> *Das Gemeine lockt jeden: siehst du in Kürze von vielen/Etwas geschehen, sogleich denke nur: dies ist gemein.*
> (What is cheap charms everyone; if you see anything which catches on quickly, just think: this is cheap.)

Mr Greenberg continues:

> The case of what passes nowadays for advanced-advanced art has its fascination. This isn't owed to the quality of the art; rather it has to do with its very lack of quality. The fascination is more historical, cultural, theoretical than it is esthetic. Not that no advanced art of superior quality is being produced at this time. It is, in the usual relatively small quantities. But it's not that kind of art that I call advanced-advanced art. Nor does superior art, in any case, have the kind of fascination I'm speaking of, which offers far more challenge to understanding than to taste.

More challenge to understanding than to taste. The phrase seems to me to indicate precisely one of the most significant features of contemporary art, and it follows that what one is presented with in contemplating many of its products is not an aesthetic experience

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but a problem. It follows equally that what one looks for is not aesthetic gratification but the solution to the problem.

How did such a situation arise? The *avant-garde*, says Mr Greenberg, in art or in literature, was born in France in the 1860s, and ever since then art in the West has been differentiated into, on the one hand, advanced and *avant-garde*, and, on the other, academic, official and conservative. Yet, in its origins, the notion of an *avant-garde*, in literature or art, did not comprise the idea of a well-defined and identifiable body of artists. It was simply the reflection of the efforts of a few scattered individuals to bring within the scope of art certain perceptions, sensations, effects, techniques which had hitherto been excluded by the officially recognised art of their own times. In this sense, they were doing no more than carrying through one of those radical transformations of taste which has been a recurrent feature in the history of Western art.

The change came, according to Mr Greenberg, some fifty years later. By that time, he says, it had become apparent that "every major painter since Manet and every major poet since Baudelaire (at least in France), entered the maturity of his art as a 'member' of the *avant-garde*. At this point, too, innovation and advancedness began to look more and more like given, categorical means to artistic significance apart from the question of esthetic quality. . . . " It should be said that it was the point also at which the *avant-garde* began to look like something worth joining.

Mr Greenberg gives the original credit for establishing the *avant-garde* as a recognisable entity, with specific aims and a distinct ideology of its own, to the Italian Futurists: "They were the first to think in terms of avant-garde*ness*, and to envisage newness in art as an end in itself; and they were the first group to adopt a program, posture, attitude, stance that was consciously '*avant-garde*'." But the individual hero, or villain, of the *avant-garde* movement he unhesitatingly identifies as Marcel Duchamp, with his Ready-mades, his bicycle wheel, his bottle-rack, and his urinal. In an interesting parenthesis he points out that the sensation caused by Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase" at the New York Armory exhibition of 1913 reflected the *frisson* felt by people who, for the first time, were able to watch themselves being startled by "the new", which was something quite different from the genuine artistic originality displayed by Picasso or Braque or Léger at the same exhibition.

THE DISTINCTION between "newness" as opposed to "originality" is fundamental to Mr Greenberg's article. The first implies an act of will by which the future is imported into a present which has no relevance to the past; the second involves the deepest feeling for the past even, or especially, at the very moment when it is being discarded or transcended. And indeed Mr Greenberg suggests that it was, on Duchamp's part, a simple misunderstanding (in which he has had innumerable followers) of what was genuinely original in his fellow artists which led him to believe that what was significant in them was precisely their newness, their novelty, just as, he says, younger artists since 1960 have been misled by Jackson Pollock, seeing in him a freakish and way-out apparition with no aesthetic significance and admiring him all the more for that very reason.

"Newness," novelty, as such, are not aesthetic values but sociological ones. By a curious paradox the exclusive importance attributed to them by *avant-garde* art encourages the revival of precisely those academic and conservative elements in art to which the *avant-garde* professes to be totally opposed; for where aesthetic values are excluded, a vacuum is created which academic art once again hastens to fill. Mr Greenberg's comments on this aspect of his subject are so pertinent to what is happening in the artistic world today that I feel they are worth quoting at some length.

"In the 1950s old-time, self-evident academic art began to be pushed from the current foreground of the larger art public's attention by Abstract Expressionism and *art informel*. It was left to Pop art, however, to finish the job, in the 1960s, and Pop art was able to finish it because it was more essentially, and viably, academic than Abstract Expressionism had ever been, even in its last and worst days. The current foreground was the natural habitat of academic art, and it was a habitat, moreover, that wouldn't tolerate any other kind of art. Having been thrust from that habitat in all its old guises, academic art rushed back in new ones. This marked the beginning of the present revival of avant-gardism. In the meantime the public attracted by whatever could be considered advanced art had grown enormously, so that by the early '60s it had come to coincide to all intents and purposes with the public for contemporary art in general. But this public, while it had a great appetite for the look of the advanced, turned out to have no more real stomach for the substance of it than any previous art public had. . . .

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Academic sensibility has taken to cavorting in ways that seem to defy and deny all past notions of the academic. Doesn't the academic depend, always, on the tried and proven, and isn't every sort of untried and unproven thing being adventured with here? Well, just as there's almost nothing that can't (under sufficient pressure of both taste and inspiration) be turned into high and original art, so there's almost nothing that can't be turned immediately into academic (or less than academic) art; nothing that can't be conventionalised on the spot, including unconventionality itself. It's one of avant-gardism's great theoretical services to have demonstrated that the look, at least, of the unconventional, the adventurous, the advanced, can be standardised enough to be made available to the tritest sensibility."

I do hope Mr Greenberg's article is being earnestly studied at the Institute of Contemporary Art.

★

THE DEATH OF MAURICE BOWRA will revive, and sharpen, for many people, innumerable memories of the society of which he was for so long the centre at Oxford. His influence was so essentially a personal one, indeed, that it is only in the memories of others that it will survive. The admirable obituary of him in *The Times* rightly observes that his published books do not do justice to his remarkable personality, while the wit for which he was legendary was so much a matter of character, as much as of words, that without his physical presence, his machine-gun delivery, it loses much of its most characteristic flavour.

Yet there is still something remaining in which all that was best in him, scholarship, literary taste, deep feeling, zest for life, energy, capacity for pleasure, wit itself, is preserved, one would like to think, for ever. Among his papers there will be found, I hope, a series of poems which may in the long run come to be regarded as his most lasting achievement; though when, if ever, they see the light of day they will considerably modify his public image as Warden and Vice-Chancellor.

The poems are in the form of parodies, because Bowra's was a highly complicated personality which found it difficult to express itself in writing, to create a written style of its own; somehow, in his prose, the personality seemed to leak away between the lines. It was only by indirection and evasion, by "the imitation of great masters", that he succeeded in expressing his own feelings, so that in his case parody became an original act of creation, and often one could say that the imitation at least equalled the model.

The parodies covered a very wide range, but he was at his best with the poets he loved most, particularly Yeats, whom he admired profoundly. In the same way, the subjects, or victims, of his most successful parodies were nearly always his closest friends, and in this the poems are particularly revealing, for amid all his public preoccupations, what he loved most in life was friendship and poetry. Indeed, what raises the parodies to the level of literature was the fact that they embodied, as nothing else did, the two great passions of his life, and if one wanted to appreciate everything in Bowra which is omitted from his published work, now that he is dead it is in the parodies that one would have to look for it.

In this sense, they remain his best memorial. But will it ever be exposed to public gaze? Certainly the parodies were not intended for publication, and there are good, if not final, reasons why this should be so. For in the first place they are not only wildly funny but wildly obscene, with a kind of hilarious and gargantuan obscenity more suited to the barrack-room than the common room or even the officers' mess; and, in the second place, a large part of their power and charm is precisely the kind of genial bawdiness with which the Warden recounts the adventures and indiscretions, the emotional and personal predicaments of his most intimate friends. These are considerations which make even quotation, much less publication, difficult. What would two eminent politicians think of some Shakespearean verses beginning with the line:

Imperious Crossman, dead and turned to Jay?

I do not envy the Warden of All Souls in his task as Bowra's literary executor, though I have no doubt his own love of literature will tell him where his duty lies, which is to ensure that they are preserved in a form suitable for publication at some future date. By doing so, he will achieve at least three useful objects. It will preserve Bowra, in a way that nothing else could, as the person he really was, who won the affection and admiration of innumerable friends. It would add both to literature and to the gaiety of nations. And it would provide future scholars with the fascinating task of unravelling the literary, social and personal influences which form the material out of which the parodies are composed. It may well take footnotes to explain the crossmans and the jays. *R*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Poor Who Were With Us

Old Myths & New Views—By BRIAN INGLIS

TO ARNOLD TOYNBEE, the Industrial Revolution was:

> a period as disastrous and terrible as any through which a nation ever passed; disastrous and terrible because side by side with a great increase in wealth was seen an enormous increase in pauperism; and production on a vast scale, the result of free competition, led to a rapid alienation of classes, and to the degradation of large bodies of producers.

Toynbee's view was soon to be echoed by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, who argued that if it had been possible for a Chartist to make exact comparisons of his condition in 1837 with what it would have been half-a-century before, "it is almost certain that they would have recorded a positive decline in the standard of living of large classes of the population." And later, the Hammonds were to present abundant contemporary evidence to document this opinion, in their books on the town and village labourers. To history students between the two World Wars, the predominant impression of the period was of a bleak age (the title the Hammonds gave to the book in which they summed up their researches); a period when the yeomen of England, "the right English trees" (as Southey had called them) "in which our heart of oak was matured" had been uprooted from the land to spend their declining years, broken in body, in spirit, in workhouse "bastilles"; when women had to crawl on all fours, dragging carts, in the mines; and when young children were enslaved to machines in dark satanic mills.

It comes as a surprise, then, talking to present-day students of the period, to find how widely this myth (as they are likely to call it) has been discredited—and, with it, the myth-makers. To cite the Webbs or Hammonds as sources is today almost the equivalent, in some academic circles, of basing an anthropological argument on the authenticity of Piltdown Man. Economic historians have been taking a more scientific approach to the unravelling of the mysteries of the past, and their findings, they claim, contradict the traditional view.

What has been happening in economic history roughly parallels what has been happening in another academic discipline during the same period. In psychology, the impact of Freud was for a time so great that the public came to think of a psychologist as a man who took notes from disturbed patients at the head of a couch. Inevitably, this provoked a reaction; and one of the forms it took was the emergence, in some circles, of a presumption that anecdotal evidence of this kind relied on by psycho-analysis was untrustworthy. To be acceptable, it was argued, evidence must be quantifiable, and capable of verification. The new economic historians take a similar line. In any society (they point out), at any time in history there has always been poverty. Whether the condition of the community as a whole is growing better or worse, therefore, cannot be ascertained from individual or group case histories—which, with judicious selection, can be made to prove anything the writer wants to prove. Only by sophisticated statistical analysis of all the available economic data—contemporary records of wages, prices, production, and so on—can changes in material conditions be measured. And application of these methods, the modern school claims, shows that the standard of living of the British workers as a whole actually *improved* during the period of the Industrial Revolution—roughly, the 1780s to the 1840s. For a while progress was slow—but that was mainly because of the Napoleonic wars. After 1815, in spite of setbacks, living standards rose.

THE STORY of how the old myths about the period came to be dispelled is a curious one; and it reveals the obstacles confronting those who have a new, and consequently unwelcome, academic discipline to offer—and also the way which, in the struggle to win acceptance for it, the discipline itself is subjected to strain.

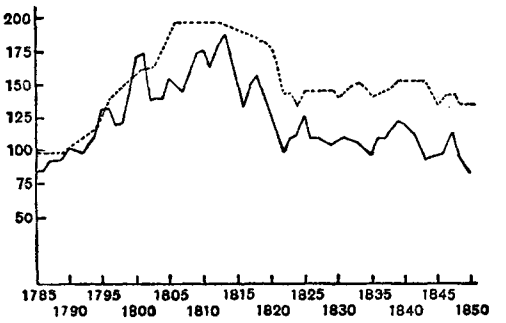
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Briefly, the thesis which had emerged from the work of the Webbs and the Hammonds was that there had been two revolutions in England towards the end of the 18th century: one on the land, where the process of enclosure of common land was greatly speeded up, so that the old agricultural economy was overthrown; the other in industry, due to the introduction of the factory system. Both revolutions increased productivity. But the country's increasing wealth did not percolate down to the labourer, who was left actually worse off than before—at least up to the middle of the century, when his condition began gradually to improve.

Some fifty years ago, however, Norman J. Silberling, an economic historian then working at the University of California, decided to test this assumption with the help of contemporary statistics. He had constructed an index of wholesale prices for Britain during the period 1779-1850. Why not—he thought—extract consumer goods, and make a graph which would show their prices, thereby giving a clue to how the consumers were affected by price fluctuations?

An article giving the results of Silberling's researches appeared in the Harvard *Review of Economic Studies* in 1923; and it caught the eye of John Clapham, who was then engaged in preparing his massive *Economic History of Modern Britain*. Clapham was of an academic type apparently less common today than it was then; tall, athletic, a celebrated mountain climber—a "hearty", in the university parlance of the time, as distinct from an intellectual. Clapham was also a dedicated patriot; and as he believed that the Industrial Revolution had laid the foundations of Britain's greatness, he was annoyed to see it disparaged, because (an obituarist was to recall) he had "an admiring appreciation of the self-adjusting action of the economic machine, and a belief in the Capitalist Order (though he did not like to hear it described as such)". Clapham and those who shared his views had watched with concern the victory of the Bolsheviks in Russia, and the rise of Socialism at home, culminating in the Labour Government of 1923. Toynbee, the Webbs, and the Hammonds were not regarded as disinterested historians, but as Socialist propagandists. They were also amateurs. Why, J. L. Hammond was actually a denizen of Fleet Street; he worked on the *Evening News*![1] And amateurs were all the more unwelcome, then as now, when they wrote best sellers.

To Clapham, Silberling's article came as a godsend. It happened that there was also an Index of wages, for the period, constructed earlier by Arthur Bowley; and Clapham was able to superimpose it on Silberling's. The resulting picture was dramatic.



Although Clapham admitted qualifications —in some years, the figures on which Bowley's wages Index had been based were scanty —the general picture which emerged was clearly of wages keeping ahead of prices. Assuming that agricultural employment was not perceptibly more irregular in the 1820s than it had been in the 1790s, a man who was earning as much as his father had in 1794 could buy just about as much as his father had bought, "unless he was spending more on beer or rent or both"—and after 1830, when the duty was abolished, beer became cheaper, too. Statisticians, Clapham claimed in his *Economic History* (1926), had always known the approximate truth:

> but historians had too often followed a familiar literary tradition. Again, the legend that everything was getting worse for the working man, down to some unspecified date between the drafting of the People's Charter and the Great Exhibition, dies hard. The fact that, after the price fall of 1820-1 the purchasing power of wages in general—not, of course, of everyone's wages—was definitely greater than it had been just before the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, fits so ill with the tradition that it is very seldom mentioned, the work of statisticians on wages and prices being constantly ignored by social historians.

Although he occasionally took an exasperated side-swipe at "social historians"—then a term of some contempt—Clapham did not ordinarily give the amateurs the satisfaction of

[1] A few years ago, in a celebrated Senior Common Room, I heard a young historian criticising a colleague for having signed his Christian name, rather than his initials, to an article: "Anybody would think he was a journalist! . . ."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

naming them. But in the same year that his book came out, an article appeared in *Economica* by a writer who had no such inhibitions. W. H. Hutt attacked the Hammonds at what had previously appeared to be their strongest point—on their use of contemporary sources. They had exploited these sources to exaggerate the "evils" (Hutt's own derisory quotation marks) of the Industrial Revolution.

To illustrate this contention, Hutt cited their handling of an episode from the House of Lords inquiry into the employment of factory children, in 1818. The factory owners, the Hammonds had alleged, had brought down their own doctors from the industrial north

> to swear that factory life was most wholesome for children, and that it was doubtful whether it would hurt them to work twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four.

Looking up the minutes of evidence, Hutt had found what actually had been said. Asked by the committee to say how long a child could be expected to work without risk to its health, Dr Hulme from Manchester refused to make any theoretical estimate. All that concerned him, he insisted, was what children could do in practice; and if he found that somebody was not injured by having stood at work for twenty-three hours, he would accept that it was not inconsistent with good health. A comparison of this passage from the minutes of evidence, Hutt sarcastically commented, with the Hammonds' account of the episode, "may help us to appreciate their scientific attitude."

IF THE HAMMONDS WERE capable of giving that subtle twist to published evidence, it could reasonably be asked, what might they not have done with their MSS sources? But Hutt was also able to make what could be regarded as an even more damaging criticism of them. They had relied on tainted evidence—the Sadler Report on the condition of children employed in factories, which they had described as "one of the main sources of knowledge of factory life at the time."

Again, Hutt examined the credentials. When, in 1832, the House of Commons had accepted his motion to appoint a committee of inquiry, Sadler had called his own witnesses first, to describe the long working hours, bad working conditions, and cruel treatment. As it happened, the parliamentary session then ended, before the employers could present their reply. Seizing his opportunity, Sadler had published the incomplete minutes of evidence. Naturally the impression left was hostile to the employers. This was soon to be corrected, Hutt noted, by the far more comprehensive report of the Royal Commission on the Factories, which came out the following year. Yet it was on the earlier one-sided Sadler report that the Hammonds had preferred to rely!

BETWEEN THEM, THEN, Silberling, Clapham and Hutt had provided a strong *prima facie* case for a reassessment of the condition of the British worker in the period of the Industrial Revolution. It was reinforced by the appearance, in 1931, of Dorothy George's *England In Transition*. Dr George approached the subject from a different standpoint. By exposing how sordid life in Britain had been in the period immediately preceding the Industrial Revolution, she claimed, she could answer the question whether it was a step forward for the workers, or whether it brought distress and degradation. There were some victims—the handloom weavers and, possibly, the agricultural labourers. But on the whole the Industrial Revolution had brought benefit: "that it was a real advance in social status I think can hardly be doubted; that it was a material advance, statistics of health and wages show."

IN SPITE OF these weighty testimonies, the new interpretation was slow to catch on. The academic establishment might share Clapham's distaste for the social historians, but it liked economic historians, with their terrifying statistics and their incomprehensible formulae, even less. The Hammonds, too, were able to ride out their critics' punches by conceding that the work of the statistician was "probably more or less correct" but pointing out that it was the *quality* of working-class life with which they had been primarily concerned. In any case, in the atmosphere engendered by the great depression, their picture seemed only too painfully familiar. The writers of the next popular social history dealing with the period—G. D. H. Cole and Raymond Postgate, whose *The Common People* was published in 1938—could follow the Hammonds' line without having to make excuses for doing so.

It was not until after World War II, in fact, that the followers of Clapham found a really effective protagonist: T. S. Ashton, professor of Political Economy at the University of London. A Chair of this kind (as he was later engagingly to recall) is not designed to promote rest: "instead of being able to give one's vacation to the refreshment of body and spirit or the pursuit of knowledge, one is forced to spend

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much of it in reading examination scripts produced not only by one's own students but also by several hundred young men and women in all parts of Britain and, indeed, in the uttermost parts of the earth. . . . " But at least this enabled him to claim, with confidence, that he knew the attitudes of mind of those students —some of whom would soon be in a position of authority, and perhaps influential in forming public opinion. According to a large number of the scripts it had been his lot to read, Ashton had found, English history between about 1760 and the setting up of the Welfare State in 1945 was supposed to have been marked by little but toil and sweat and oppression. "Economic forces, it would appear, are by nature malevolent. Every labour-saving device had led to a decline of skill and to an increase of unemployment. . . ." This was not a view to which he could subscribe; and in *The Industrial Revolution*, published in 1949, he had sought to show that it was not merely contrary to the evidence, it was against common sense.

> It would have been strange, indeed [Ashton explained] if the Industrial Revolution had simply made the rich richer and the poor poorer. For the commodities to which it gave rise were not, in general, luxuries, but necessaries and capital goods.

The necessaries must have been available to the community far more cheaply than in the pre-machine age; as for the capital goods, they were required to make more of the necessaries, to feed and clothe and generally sustain the growing population. The fruits of Capitalism, Ashton conceded, had taken some time to reach the consumer, but that was because of the incapacity of politicians and the fact that the growing population led to an increase in demand. Even before the end of the long Napoleonic wars, "as Professor Silberling has shown, industrial wages in England caught up with retail prices, and in the 1820s, the gain was pronounced." By 1831 the cost of living was 11 per cent higher than in 1790, "but over this span of time urban wages had increased, it appears, by no less than 43 per cent."

Ashton became a member of the Mont Pelerin Society, a group of economists, historians, and social philosophers of whom F. A. Hayek was the moving spirit. They used to meet periodically to discuss how to preserve freedom from the totalitarian threat—which, with the defeat of Nazism in Germany, they thought came mainly from the left. It was in a paper read at one of the Society's meetings that Ashton was to recall his experiences with his students' essays, when he first took up his London post; and he speculated on why they should have held the views they did. Although modern youth was prone to melancholy, Ashton did not think that was the reason; the responsibility, he felt, lay with their teachers.

> A good deal—indeed, far too much—of what appears in the scripts is literal reproduction of the spoken or written word. Much the greater part of the responsibility must lie with the professional economic historian.

The professional, Ashton feared, had not been resolute enough in combating the propaganda of the amateurs. He had let them brainwash his students into believing that the period of the Industrial Revolution was one of misery and degradation. To Hayek, this represented a challenge; and he met it by bringing out some of the talks—including Ashton's—which had been given to the Mont Pelerin Society meeting in his *Capitalism and the Historians*, published in 1952. Historical myths, Hayek argued in his introduction, had been playing as great a role in shaping opinion as historical facts.

> There is, however, one supreme myth which more than any other has served to discredit the economic system to which we owe our present-day civilisation and to which the examination of which the present volume is devoted. It is the legend of the deterioration of the position of the working classes in consequence of the use of "capitalism" (or of the "manufacturing" or the "industrial system") . . . the belief that the undeniable growth of wealth which the competitive order has produced was purchased at the price of depressing the standard of life of the weakest elements of society.

The condition of the workers in the Industrial Revolution, in other words, was, once again, being used for propagandist purposes—but this time with the idea of rebutting, rather than aiding, socialism.

BY THE EARLY 1950s, THOUGH, there were already signs that Hayek and Ashton had their shoulders to an opening door. Students were no longer being fed the old diet; a new generation of economic historians had grown up to whom the work of Clapham and Ashton was as familiar as, and more acceptable than, the work of the Webbs and the Hammonds; and they were beginning to be academically influential in their own right. They were also forging a powerful weapon,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

methodology—derived from the use of meticulous research to collect all the available evidence, and of refined statistical techniques to evaluate it. More and more, the editors of periodicals concerned with economic history, on both sides of the Atlantic, began to look for articles with a methodological approach; and in connection with the Industrial Revolution period, the results appeared most gratifying to Ashton and his disciples. "Estimates of wealth, production indexes, price series, consumption trends", R. M. Hartwell—by this time emerging as the leader of the Young Turks—felt able to claim in the *American Journal of Economic History* in 1959, all pointed to "an *unambiguous* increase" in the workers' average standard of living during the period.

In assuming that this issue had finally been settled, Hartwell was a little premature. What had been happening was a gradual polarisation of attitudes to the subject, so that two rival schools of thought had emerged: the Pessimists, as they came to be called, who held to the traditional Toynbee line; and the Optimists,[2] who followed Clapham and Ashton—a contest tentatively documented in *The Industrial Revolution: Triumph or Disaster?*[3] But the Optimists were certainly in the ascendant. Significantly, when the *Economic History Review* decided in 1963 to include what was billed as a "discussion" on the standard of living of the English worker during the period of the Industrial Revolution, between Hartwell and E. J. Hobsbawm (who had emerged as the chief champion of the Pessimists) it turned out not to be a discussion at all, in any meaningful sense. Hobsbawm presented his case in one article; Hartwell dissected it in another.[4] In the circumstances, Hartwell's confidence was understandable. In the period under discussion, he claimed,

> real national income *per capita* was increasing; imports *per capita* were increasing faster than exports *per capita;* the burden of taxation *per capita* was decreasing and its incidence becoming less regressive; capital accumulation was not achieved at the expense of consumption; all these aggregate indices were achieving higher rates of growth than the rate of growth of the population.

The Pessimists retained one advantage; they still had the best tunes—and the most popular players. The work honoured by being chosen as the 1,000th Pelican, for example, was E. P. Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class*, a work in the Hammonds' traditions. But Thompson was under no illusions. In the original hard-cover version, when it came out on 1963, he had admitted that Optimism was becoming the new orthodoxy. What had originally been presented as valuable qualifications of the traditional view, he wrote, "have passed by imperceptible stages to new generalisations (which the evidence can rarely sustain) and from generalisations to a ruling attitude." It can hardly have surprised him when he saw that the *Economic History Review*, one of whose co-editors was by this time R. M. Hartwell, had sent the review copy to R. M. Hartwell and R. Currie to criticise, which they did with relish. In the Pelican edition, Thompson was to be found making the same lament that Ashton had made twenty years before—only the other way round: now, it was the Pessimists who had been failing in their duty to speak up for the cause. "The Hammonds in their lifetime turned too often towards their critics a genteel cheek of silence, and after that they were dead"; and for more than twenty years, in articles and seminars, the methodologists had been able to knock the Sentimentalists with impunity.

BUT WHY WITH impunity? Why have the Pessimists been unable to hit back?

There are two main reasons. One is that the Pessimists have not, as a rule, been trained economists; and any attempt to take on methodology on its own ground could be humiliating for them. The other is that those Pessimists who have the required grounding in economics have tended to be Marxists; and they have found themselves in an anomalous position. Temperamentally they are considerably closer to the methodologists than to, say, the Hammonds. Certainly they do not want to be identified with any campaign which would set up the likes of William Cobbett, or for that matter Robert Owen, as the heroes of the era. So the Optimists have had things easy—too easy, Thompson claimed in his Pelican afterword; as a result they have grown careless: "a certain professional scowl,

[2] Finding the appellations a little frivolous, the contestants have tried to introduce more respectable-sounding alternatives, like "Deteriorationists" and "Meliorists." But, not surprisingly, these terms have failed to catch on. The Optimists sometimes refer to their opponents as "Sentimentalists." The Pessimists have not, so far as I know, coined any suitable reprisal.

[3] Edited by Philip A. M. Taylor (Boston, 1959).

[4] Hobsbawm was allowed a brief rejoinder, as the proposer is in debates; but he did not have the space to deal with Hartwell's criticisms.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a suggestion of anti-sentimental rigour, has served to cover any *lacunae* in scholarship."

The methodologists have not had things entirely their own way; their thesis has been subjected to some critical scrutiny, notably by Mark Blaug. Nevertheless it remains true that the most effective as well as the most entertaining, demolition of their pretensions has been the work of an Optimist—T. S. Ashton himself, in his *Journal of Economic History* article which Hayek innocently reprinted in *Capitalism and the Historians*. It is a brief, almost a throw-away passage criticising Silberling; but it will serve as a starting point for an examination of the method of the methodologists.

Ashton was careful to say that he thought Silberling's index of wholesale prices, was an admirable research tool. But the Cost-of-living Index derived from it was another matter, because it was based on the assumption that the British worker consumed wholesale goods, which demonstrably he did not do: "my ancestors of the period did not nourish themselves by munching wheat and oats. They did not cover their nakedness with raw wool and cotton and flax." The index had also failed to make allowance for government duties, which then constituted a very substantial proportion of the cost of bread, beer, leather, candles, and other consumer foods. In any case:

> the man whose scheme of expenditure conformed to that drawn up by Silberling had many idiosyncrasies, he did not occupy a house, or at least he was not called upon to pay rent. He allowed himself only a moderate amount of bread and very little porridge, and he never touched potatoes and strong drink. On the other hand he got through quite considerable quantities of beef and mutton and showed a fondness for butter. Perhaps he was a diabetic.

What Ashton omitted to point out, though, was that in making Silberling's Cost-of-living Index look ridiculous, he had made Clapham —who had used it to prove his contention that workers' living standards had improved in the period—look ridiculous too. Admittedly Clapham had been cautious: he referred to the "potential" improvement of living standards, and he emphasised that not all workers were beneficiaries. Nevertheless he had asserted, on the basis of Silberling's findings, that "that rather vague figure, the average English (with Welsh) labourer" appeared to have improved his gross earnings between 1794 and 1824 "by about £5 a year"—in other words by about 15-20 per cent. If Silberling's technique was at fault, there could be no justification for any such claim.

Even if Silberling's Cost-of-living Index had turned out by some chance to have been substantially accurate, though, there would still have been no justification for Clapham to interpret it the way he did, by relating it to Bowley's prices index. The most accurate of wage indexes can only apply to wage *earners*; so, to make his point that the English labourer was better off in the 1820s than he had been thirty years before, Clapham needed to prove that employment was no more irregular. He therefore claimed, without explaining why, that this was "a fairly reasonable assumption." In fact, as a glance at the Parliamentary debates and the evidence given to committees in the 1820s should have told him, it was a highly unreasonable assumption. Agriculture in the 1820s was in a depressed condition, compelling farmers to lay off labourers; and workers in industry suffered severely from unemployment after the catastrophic slump of 1825.

WHAT, THEN, OF THE THIRD MEMBER of the Optimist Trinity, W. H. Hutt? Unlikely though it is that many students have seen the original issue of *Economica* in which his article appeared, they have had no difficulty in reading it, as it was reprinted by Hayek in *Capitalism and the Historians*—the only pre-War article to receive that accolade. And since that time, it has been described by Hartwell as a "most damaging attack" on the Hammonds.

Is it? At first sight it may appear damaging for the Hammonds to have attributed to doctors the belief that it was doubtful if it would hurt children to work twenty-three hours of the twenty-four, when what Dr Hulme had actually said was that should it *appear* that a factory child was not injured by having stood for twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four, he would *then* say it was "not inconsistent with the health of the person so employed." But what kind of a doctor would resort to such an evasion? Hulme might as well have said that if a factory child did not appear to be worried at losing her fingers in a machine, then what was the harm?

Hulme evidently knew what he was expected to do—to justify the long hours worked by children; he was giving evidence to suit his employers. Hutt contended that the doctors who gave evidence for the factory owners "had, in this case, practical experience of 'manufactories', and had *observed* children

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

employed in them"—presumably to point the contrast with the London doctors, who were saying that the children's working day of twelve to fourteen hours was too long. But Hulme, on his own admission, had apparently not been inside a factory for years; he could not even tell the committee whether the children had to stand all through the working day, or were allowed to sit (in many factories, they were forbidden to sit).

In relation to Dr Hulme's evidence, therefore, the Hammonds' breach of the academic proprieties becomes venial enough. There remains, though, Hutt's more serious charge, that the Hammonds chose to rely on a suspect source, the report of the 1832 Sadler Committee on the factories.

Again, Hutt's case at first sight seems unassailable. Why should the Hammonds have preferred the one-sided evidence given to the Sadler committee to the report of the Royal Commission on the subject the following year—if the Commission, as Hutt claimed, provided "effective answers to nearly all the charges made before the (Sadler) committee"?

What made Hutt's case seem all the more impressive was that he was able to cite Friedrich Engels in his favour. In the *Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844,* Engels described Sadler's report as "a very partisan document, which was drawn up entirely by the enemies of the factory system for purely political purposes." Led astray by his sympathy for the oppressed, Sadler had made assertions of "a most misleading and erroneous kind"; his questions were posed in such a way that the answers, though correct, would leave "a wholly false impression." In spite of the Royal Commissioners' obvious sympathy with the factory owners, Engels felt, their report came closer to the truth.

Engels is not a writer on whose opinions Optimists ordinarily place reliance. It can, however, be useful for scripture writers to quote the devil for their own purposes; and in view of Engels' obvious Marxist prejudices, they argue, he must on this occasion have been displaying unwonted objectivity. But he was not. Engels regarded Sadler's radical Tory approach as much less congenial than the harder-headed, capitalist-orientated attitude of the Royal Commission.

To Engels, the Royal Commission seemed a most welcome example of capitalism's compulsion to develop along the lines he predicted it *must* develop. The three Commissioners—Thomas Tooke, Southwood Smith, and Edwin Chadwick—were all dedicated disciples of Ricardo; and they had been chosen for that reason by the Government. Their function was to find a way to absolve the then Government from interference in industry, *i.e.* to facilitate the preservation of *laissez faire.* So far as Engels was concerned, here was capitalism in the iron grip of its own ruthless logic. The radical Tories, on the other hand, were trying to humanise capitalism. Worse, in the process they had been seeking to disrupt "working-class solidarity"; and they had had disconcerting success in doing so, at least in the Industrial North, where Oastler and J. R. Stephens had been carrying on along Sadler's lines.

Engels, then, had a motive for denigrating the Sadler evidence. But it also seems probable that he had not even read it with any care. Because Sadler reached different conclusions from the Royal Commissioners (he thought that the evidence pointed to a need for a general limitation of working hours; the Commissioners argued that only children's hours of work should be restricted) Engels assumed that the Sadler evidence must have been different, and more partisan. But comparing the two, it quickly becomes clear that the evidence is virtually interchangeable. The Royal Commissioners did indeed cast doubt on the trustworthiness of some individual witnesses who had given evidence before the Sadler committee. But so far from providing (as Hutt claimed) "effective answers to nearly all the charges made before the Committee", they revealed that those charges had been only too well-founded. As for the charge that there had been systematic cruelty to children in the factories—which, Hutt asserted, the Royal Commission showed "to have been entirely without foundation"—the Royal Commission not merely agreed that there had been cruelty, but actually emphasised that it *had* been systematic.

The members of the Royal Commission, admittedly, had an ulterior motive. All three of them were believers in the current political economy of the day; they were hostile to any state interference in industry. If it had to come, they agreed, it should be confined to the protection of children. In their report, they therefore stressed that the cruelty to children was due solely to the long hours they worked—not to any defect in the factory system. And it could be remedied simply by regulating children's employment. So, ingeniously, they were able to use the same evidence to reach what appeared to be conclusions diametrically opposed to Sadler, who wanted adult working

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hours limited. It was the fact that the *conclusions* were different, presumably, which deceived Engels—and Hutt.

THE TRIPOD, THEN, upon which Optimism was originally established—Silberling's Cost-of-living Index, Clapham's thesis based on it, and Hutt's demolition of the Hammonds—turns out to be of distinctly rickety construction. How, then has Optimism contrived to present itself as scientific?

Again, there is a parallel with present-day psychology. Behaviourists freely admit that mistakes were made—in the early stages—before their techniques were refined. So it is with the economic historians. Ashton, for one, made that excuse for Silberling; explorers are apt to make mistakes because the territory they are opening up is new. But this excuse can hardly be applied to, say, the 1958 edition of Engels' *Condition of the Working Class in England*, edited and introduced by W. O. Henderson and W. H. Chaloner (Blackwell).

It is unusual for editors to undertake a task of this kind as a labour of distaste; but in their Preface, and in their footnotes, they make no attempt to disguise their antipathy for the author and his work. Still (as Macaulay showed in his essay on Croker's edition of Boswell's *Johnson*) there can be pleasure and profit in such an evisceration; and Friedrich Engels, as the John the Baptist of Pessimism, was an obvious target. Henderson and Chaloner, accordingly, went to work methodologically on every fact in Engels' book which could be checked on—every figure, every date, every quotation. And they had little difficulty in showing that he was distinctly careless, not to say slipshod, in such matters. Engels, his editors accordingly felt justified in concluding,

> can hardly be taken seriously as a historian, he cannot be taken very seriously as a prophet, either . . . the true significance of the book lies in the fact that it was a brilliant political tract.

Engels would not have objected to that last accusation; it was as a tract—"a bill of indictment", he described it—that he wrote the book. And he was also to admit that he had been unsuccessful as a prophet. But . . . not a reliable *witness*? It was precisely because he had been an eye-witness, and apparently a reliable one, that the book made, and has continued to make, such an impression. Was he really simply slanting his observations to suit his political convictions?

Simple carelessness, after all, would not be enough to damn Engels. The real test is whether he actually twisted his sources to make the facts suit his political and social preconceptions. If he did, Henderson and Chaloner produced no evidence of it—though the lengths that they went to in tracking down inaccuracies can be gauged from their revelation that Engels, quoting from a book which had been published some years earlier, had reported that certain criminals referred to had not been arrested; Henderson (or Chaloner) found that they had been brought to justice, *after* that book had been published! At times, in their search, the two of them seem to be getting desperate—so much so that Hobsbawm was able to claim (doubtless with relief) that Engels comes out of their inquisition "with flying colours; much better than one could have expected. . . ."

The same can hardly be said for Henderson and Chaloner—as Asa Briggs showed in his *New Statesman* review. Hobsbawm, too, gave examples in his review of their book of the tactics into which their single-minded pursuit of their quarry had led them; others can be added.

They made much, for example, of the fact that Engels abridged quotations without indicating to the reader he was doing so, in a way that "falls well below generally accepted standards of scholarship." It is an elementary axiom, they insisted, that "quotations should be accurately reproduced." It has become such an axiom; but they might have mentioned that at the time, Engels was in respectable company; Macaulay himself justified abridgement, so so long as the sense of the quotations was not distorted. Henderson and Chaloner contented themselves with saying that Engels "garbled" certain passages—a convenient term, because it implies, but does not assert, actual distortion. But the evidence they provided in justification even of the lesser charge is slender. The worst they could show was that Engels, purporting to quote from the Report of the Poor Law Commission, actually quoted from the Index to it. Naughty, perhaps; but the Commissioners themselves would have had to admit that it provided a succinct summary of their views.

Henderson and Chaloner, too, were not always meticulous with their own sources. They accused Engels of having "led his readers to believe that the grim picture of 1833 had not been materially altered by the 1840s." Yet Engels wrote that as a result of the passing of the 1833 Act (he thought it was 1834, careless fellow, but let that pass) "the most blatant

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

evils of the factory system virtually disappeared." Again, criticising Engels for neglecting to show how other reforms had improved the lot of the British worker, the editors put first on their list of reforms the abolition of "Truck"—payment of wages in kind—in 1830-1. But to Engels it was (as it still is) notorious that the Truck Act was from the start a dead letter. And another of the reforms on their list, the Government's grant for education, was hardly more effective.

To complete their case against Engels, Henderson and Chaloner gave a long quotation from an *Edinburgh Review* article, written in 1846, denouncing continental commentators who had been criticising Britain, and making an impassioned defence of the way in which Parliament had looked after the poor. Whatever reproaches might be cast on Parliament for their sufferings (the writer of the article claimed) it could not "be justly accused of having treated them with indifference or neglect"; no other nation had ever "set to work with a more single-minded resolution, or a humanity more regardless of consequence, to discover and lay bare its own defects"—a view which Henderson and Chaloner described as "pertinent." Although *Edinburgh* articles were unsigned, there is no secret who wrote this one; George Cornewall Lewis. As one of the Poor Law Commissioners, he had been the target of some of Engels' most effective and blistering criticism. For Henderson and Chaloner to have quoted him in this context without disclosing his identity is as if the National Coal Board were to cite a review in the *Times Literary Supplement*, praising its achievements, without mentioning that the reviewer was Lord Robens.

ONCE AGAIN, THE PARALLEL with Psychology suggests itself. The Behaviourists believe that they are being scientific, and indeed they crave to be; that is their *raison d'être*. But they are also human. They have been compelled, whether they like it or not, to campaign against the enemy—in their case, the Freudians. They want to win that campaign; and in the process, they have sometimes unwittingly picked up the subjective weapons which they have scoffed at the enemy for using. The Optimists, similarly, have become involved in a struggle for the soul (not that they would care to use that term) of History. In the heat of the battle, they have occasionally lost their academic objectivity.

That is understandable; what is less easy to accept is the way in which, to win their campaigns, methodology has been stretched by economic historians—as by Behaviourists—to fit situations to which it is inapplicable because they cannot be quantitatively measured.

This is the cardinal weakness of the Optimists' argument that standards of living improved in Britain in the period of the Industrial Revolution. The case, they claim, has long been settled.

> What conclusion follows from the evidence? [Hartwell asked twenty years ago] Surely, since the indices point in the same direction, even though the change cannot be measured with accuracy, that the standard of living of the mass of the people of England was improving in the first half of the nineteenth century, slowly during the war, more quickly after 1815, and rapidly after 1840?

That the indices all point in the same direction has been disputed, notably by Hobsbawm: but, for discussion's sake, it is worth accepting that Hartwell's assumption about them is correct. If so, is his assumption about the rising standard of living necessarily correct, too?

It is not, and for a very simple reason. In the early part of the nineteenth century, child labour came to be used on a scale it had never been used on before. Children formed the bulk of the factory population, and were also more freely employed in workshops, wherever the division of labour made it possible to employ them. As a result, a family's income might increase even if the father was a handloom weaver, whose earnings were dwindling. The need to maintain children's earnings consequently became one of the employers' most effective objections to factory legislation.

Their argument has now been adopted by the Optimists. Duncan Bythell, for example, uses it in his recent book on *The Handloom Weavers*. Bythell might be described as a third generation Optimist; the book was originally written as a Ph.D. thesis under the supervision of Hartwell, who wrote the introduction. Even Bythell cannot deny that the handloom weavers were casualties of the Industrial Revolution, their earnings sinking from around 30s a week at the turn of the century to around five shillings a week in the early 1830s All he can do is suggest that they were sometimes not as badly off as was made out; and that it was their own fault for staying in the business when there were "plenty" of jobs going which they could have turned their hands to. In any case, Bythell's point is that individual earnings are relatively unimportant, in assessing the effect of the Industrial Revolution; "the final qualifying factor as regards

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the standard of living is, of course, the question of family earnings."

Family earnings do indeed provide the vital clue, but not in the way Bythell imagines. The notion that the family is the important economic unit, because most families pool their resources, may seem only common sense—because even when father remained a weaver, the family income might not be reduced if his wife and children were working. If methodology ever can provide convincing proof that the earnings (and the consumption) of the labouring class in the industrial areas rose, between 1780 and 1830, this will be the obvious explanation. But it would not vindicate the Industrial Revolution, in the sense that Clapham wished it to be vindicated. Would anybody today seriously suggest that a family of four in which father, mother, and two children were working twelve hours a day, or more, six days a week and earning between them 25s a week, were "better off" than the family next door, where only the father worked, earning 20s a week, while mother did the house-work and the children went to school? The idea is grotesque.

Ashton, though irritated by the Pessimists' politics, at least realised methodology's limitations. In his Mont Pelerin Society address, he warned of the difficulty of measuring changes in living standards by statistical means: "we must restrict our ambitions, realise the limitations of our bag of tricks, and refrain from generalisations."[5] But with some honourable exceptions, like J. D. Chambers of Nottingham, the methodologists have found it difficult to heed this warning.

THE HAMMONDS, THEN, were right: what matter are the changes in the quality of life, which are rarely quantifiable; and the changes in the quality of the life of most town and village labourers in the Industrial Revolution period were demonstrably for the worse. Where the Pessimists have been wrong is in attributing the deterioration to "capitalism".

The fact was, there was no alternative to capitalism. Even the term "socialism" was unknown until the 1830s, and the failure of the Owenite communities was to disillusion all but the most dedicated of his followers with his co-operative idea. The only possible course for any government seeking to set up a different economic system would have been the restoration of Mercantilism. The notion that Mercantilism was inherently inefficient, restrictive, and reactionary is still firmly established; but there were aspects of it which accord well enough with present-day anti-pollutionist thinking; and, by implication at least, writers as diverse as Cobbett, Coleridge and Sismondi favoured something of the kind. It would, in fact, be possible to make out a case for the proposition that the community would have been better off if the Industrial Revolution had come at a time when Mercantilism was still dominant. But the process of dismantling the mercantilist structure had gone too far, by the end of the eighteenth century, for it to be restored.

Capitalism, therefore, had the field to itself. The issue that mattered was consequently what *kind* of capitalist system would emerge; and here, the influence of the political economists made itself felt. Malthus's theory of population, reinforced by Ricardo's theory of wages, intimated that the labourer's income could not rise above subsistence level, except locally and for short periods. It followed that there was no point in either the State or the employers trying to raise wages artificially. And naturally this was just what the Government and the employers wanted to hear; it absolved them from responsibility, and from blame, for what was happening.

But (as Robert Owen argued) by accepting this hypothesis capitalism was cutting its own throat. If wages stayed at subsistence levels, the labouring classes must lack the purchasing power which alone could create effective demand for the goods which the new machines could produce. The result was a succession of gluts and recessions, bankruptcies and unemployment. And the growth of foreign trade did not necessarily help the labourers; as Poulett Scrope (an undeservedly neglected economic thinker) inquired, what was the use of a trade won by screwing down wages in Britain, "which occasions poverty and misery at home, in order to increase the comforts of the South American peon?" But ministers preferred to listen to Ricardo.

Nor was that all. The capitalism which developed in Britain was not *laissez faire,* in the original sense; but what the employers preferred to call *laissez nous faire.* Adam Smith

[5] Professor Asa Briggs has pointed out to me that Ashton's optimism stemmed less from methodological preconceptions than from a kind of Northern England patriotism; he found it hard to believe that his industrialist radical forefathers did worse than the feudal aristocracy they were superseding.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had warned against it, but that fact was forgotten; employers were able to resist Parliamentary attempts to regulate the hours of work of children, on the ground that it constituted "interference". Not all the political economists accepted this proposition; but Ricardo, the most influential of them, did nothing to combat it, and as a result there was to be no effective regulation of children's employment until the 1930s.

IT WAS NOT "capitalism", then, which was responsible for the ugliness of the era, but a particular version of capitalism. And it is fascinating to speculate what might have happened if Owen's early alternative—Keynesian, broadly speaking—had been adopted, instead. But it was not adopted; and the industrial labourers in Britain were condemned to a system which was not merely cruel, but was grossly inefficient. Optimists still sometimes argue, as a clincher, that even if the Industrial Revolution did bring misery, as it unquestionably did for the handloom weavers, this was necessary to lay the foundation of Britain's future prosperity (much the same argument as used to be used about flogging and fagging in public schools). But the trouble with *laissez nous faire* capitalism was precisely that it *failed* to lay those secure foundations; the economy remained chronically unstable. It was only when State intervention through the Factory Acts began to exclude child workers—the reduction in the labour force helping to keep wages up even when prices fell owing to the repeal of the Corn Laws—that greater stability developed, so that by the 1850s there was relative prosperity.

THE METHODOLOGIST can, of course, claim that he is not concerned with the merits of different varieties of capitalism; or with the interpretation which Clapham and Hayek put on the evidence. But methodology has something to answer for on its own account. Because most contemporary accounts conflict with its findings, the tendency has been to dismiss them as "anecdotal" and, by implication, to cast doubt on the veracity, or at least the reliability, of the writers. Hartwell has even claimed that "for every contemporary that criticised there was one that praised." It would be interesting to know the statistical basis for his assertion; but in any case it is an irrelevance. What matters is the quality of the yea-sayers and the nay-sayers; and it is hard to think of any contemporary writer whose name is still remembered who had a good word to say for the system.

The political economists, admittedly, were for a time Optimists—except for Malthus. But one by one they became converted to pessimism, particularly about the condition of (and prospects for) the workers under the industrial system as they knew it—Ricardo, Mill, Torrens, McCulloch; not to mention their most famous expounder, Harriet Martineau.[6] Macaulay was an Optimist but when in 1830 he insisted that a greater share of the national wealth was falling "to almost every individual, than fell to the share of any corresponding class" he made it clear, in his list of working-class beneficiaries ("the serving man, the artisan, and the husbandman") that he was not including the labourer. The Pessimists, on the other hand, leaving aside those economists and reformers who were actively involved in the campaign for State intervention in industry, included Byron, Carlyle, Cobbett, Coleridge, Dickens, Disraeli, Peacock, Walter Scott, Shelley, Southey, and Wordsworth. Against them —who? Andrew Ure? His *Philosophy of Manufactures*, published in 1835, is often quoted, as it happens to have been the first full-scale apologia for the factory system. A single extract suffices to gauge its level:

> I have seen tens of thousands of old, young and middle-aged of both sexes, many of them too feeble to get their daily bread by any of the former means of industry, earning abundant food, raiment and domestic accommodation without perspiring at a single pore, screened meanwhile from the summer's sun and the winter's frost, in apartments more airy and salubrious than those of the metropolis in which our legislative and fashionable aristocracies dwell. In these spacious halls the benignant power of steam summons around him his myriads of willing menials, and assigns to each the regulated task, substituting for painful muscular effort on their part, the energies of his own gigantic arm, and demanding in return only attention and dexterity to correct such little aberrations as casually occur in his workmanship.

Such, Ure claimed, was the factory system, "replete with prodigies and political economy."

To have to take such writers seriously would be bad enough; what is worse, though,

[6] Another work much quoted by Optimists is Lord Robbins' *The Theory of Economic Policy in English Classical Economy* (1953), in which he tried to show that Ricardo, McCulloch, and the rest did not deserve the ugly reputation given them by the Pessimists. But Lord Robbins was highly selective in his quotations. What he did not show was the remarkable development by which classical economy, in the space of little more than a decade (1817-29), went through a revolution in which most of its original propositions were abandoned.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is that methodology, to justify itself, has been forced to discredit the evidence of the Pessimists. Even Ashton was sometimes guilty. Nobody has ever suggested that Cobbett was anything but a faithful reporter of what he saw; but Ashton claimed that his memory was defective—that he and his like pictured an earlier England "peopled with merry peasants or sturdy beef-eating yeomen, just as their predecessors of the age of Dryden conjured up a vision of a Patagonia peopled with noble savages." This is a travesty; nobody knew better than Cobbett that there had always been poverty (and, he used to insist, always would be). His theme was simply that the workers on the land were worse off than they had been when he was young, owing to the uprooting of labourers and small-holders from their plots, and the pauperising effect of the way the poor laws were administered.

If the testimony of such men as Cobbett is to be rejected because it does not fit the methodological pattern, the study of the past will become barren indeed. As Professor Jacob Viner has commented:

> Fully as I respect the current zeal for expert quantification of history as a virtue in itself, I regard it, like all other virtues, as competitive with other values, such as, in the present instances, relevance to fact and relevance to questions that non-statisticians care to ask. In this instance, as in many others, I find the judgement or even conjecture of a contemporary person of presumptive honesty and intelligence often the safest guide available, though rarely a safe guide. It is prudent always to bear in mind that detailed bits of evidence constitute the sole genuine record of high or even moderate reliability that the past bequeaths to us.[7]

One such bit of evidence was given by one of the witnesses giving evidence to the Commons Committee inquiring into factory conditions in 1816. He had been a magistrate in Manchester, living not far from a cotton mill; and all he knew of the lives of the children who worked in it was derived from hearing the factory bell. It rang at 4.30 a.m. to wake the children; and, again, half an hour later, to signal the start of work for the day. It rang again at nine in the evening to signal the day's work was over. Six days a week, fifty-two weeks a year, with only the occasional day's holiday—which might have to be made up for by longer hours during the rest of the week—those children started off from their homes before it was light, except in mid-summer; and did not return home, except in mid-summer, until after it was dark. That Manchester magistrate had never been into the mill. He had never even seen the children. But the bell told him—and its echo can remind us—of the lives they must have had to lead.

[7] *The Long View and the Short* (1958).

Poem

God, can you hear me? Then rustle that tree.
Excellent, now listen, why then last night
Did your knotty fingers grab hold of me
And haul me through the heath and trick my sight
With looming bushes and billowing fog
And hurl me down hard into that black bog?
Oh but I know. My injunction is out.
The trees hush up what I talk about.
Forgive me, I saw too much of you.
The trees don't lose their heads in the blue.
I have seen too much of you and me,
A starfish over-impressed with the sea.
The starlings nest with their own small fuss,
And I must learn I am one of us.

N. S. Willey

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marin Sorescu

Four Poems

Paintings

All the museums are afraid of me
Whenever I spend a whole day
In front of a painting
The following day they announce
It has disappeared.

Every day I am found stealing
In another part of the world
Yet I don't care
Either for the bullets which whistle past my ears
Or the police dogs
Which now know the smell of my steps
Better than lovers
The perfume of their beloved.

I talk loudly to the oil paintings that endanger my life
I hang them up on the clouds and trees
Then stand back to get the perspective
With the Italian masters it's easy to start a conversation
What a chatter of colours!
And so with them
I am easily detected
Heard and seen from a distance
As if I carried parrots.

The most difficult to steal is Rembrandt
You reach to touch him and come upon darkness
You panic, his people have no bodies
Only eyes locked in dark cellars.

Van Gogh's canvases are mad
They swirl and turn head over heel
You must keep a tight grip
With both hands
They are sucked in by some power from the Moon.

Why should Breughel make me cry
He was no older than me
Yet he was named the Elder
Because he knew everything when he died.

I try to learn from him
But I can't keep my tears
From running on his golden frames
As I escape with the seasons under my arm.

As I told you
Every night I steal a painting
With a dexterity to be envied
And yet it is such a long way
I am finally caught.
So I come home late at night
Tired, torn by dogs,
Bearing in my hands a cheap reproduction.

Shakespeare

Shakespeare created the world in seven days.

The first day he made the sky, the mountains, and the spiritual abysses.
The second day he made the rivers, the seas, the oceans,
And the other sentiments
And gave them to Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Antony, Cleopatra and Ophelia
To Othello and the others
To master them, themselves and their descendants,
Unto eternity.
The third day he gathered all people
And taught them the tastes:
The taste of happiness, of love, of distress,
The taste of jealousy, glory and so on
Until no tastes were left.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Then some characters came along late.
The creator patted them on the head sympathetically
And said the only thing left for them to become was
Literary critics
And deny his works.
The fourth and fifth days were dedicated to laughter.
He let out the clowns to do somersaults
And let kings, emperors
And other unfortunates have fun.
The sixth day he solved some administrative problems
He plotted a storm
And taught King Lear
How to wear the crown of straws.
There was still some waste left from the creation of the world
So he made Richard III.
The seventh day he was wondering whether there was still anything to do:
Stage directors had already flooded the earth with posters
So Shakespeare decided after so much labour
He deserved to see a show himself.
But first, as he felt quite exhausted,
He passed away for a while.

Superstition

My cat is washing herself
With the left paw
We shall have another war

For I notice
Whenever she washes
With her left paw
International tension grows
Considerably

How can she see
The five continents?
Maybe in her eyes
The Pythoness moves
Who knows by heart
All the world's history
Without punctuation

I feel like crying
When I think that both I
And the heaven of souls bundled
On my back
Should depend in the last instance
On a capricious cat

Go and catch mice
Never again unleash
World wars
Fuck off
You bitch

Fresco

When the wicked
Are processed in hell
Nothing goes to waste.

By means of tweezers
The women's heads are emptied of
Combs, grips, pins, rings,
Soft goods and bed linen.
Then they are thrown
Into bubbling cauldrons
To see that the brimstone
Doesn't boil over.

Afterwards some
Are changed into saucepans
And carry to retired devils' homes
Hot sins.

The males too are made use of
For all the heavy work;
Except for the very hairy—
They are rewoven
And made into doormats.

Translated from the Rumanian by
Timothy Cribb and Constantin Roman

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEATRE

A French No-Play

By John Weightman

MARGUERITE DURAS' play, *The Lovers of Viorne (L'arnante anglaise)* now running at the Royal Court Theatre, is a complete negation of traditional drama, an extreme example of the anti-play, which makes no concessions whatever to entertainment or to the average staying power of audiences. Both titles, the French as well as the English, are perversely misleading, because there are no lovers at Viorne and no Englishwoman in love. The action is even more inward than in classical tragedy. There are only two characters, but they do not appear on the stage at the same time; they merely occupy the same chair in turn and talk. If the playgoer can sit through this experience, and in a curious way enjoy it, he has clearly passed some kind of test. I am glad to say that I stood the strain. I am now in a better position to admit that, a few weeks earlier, I had walked out of Arrabal's *The Emperor and the Architect* at the National Theatre. Nothing would have persuaded me to face the second half of that load of Hispano-French rhetoric. Even during the first half I could only check my impulse to flee by counting the pimples on Jim Dale's naked behind, for which exercise I was conveniently placed, being in the second row. But whereas Arrabal is just neurosis (or dottiness) rampant, Marguerite Duras has a weird something, even though she has been partly affected by the present rarefied Parisian atmosphere, where structuralists speak only to semiologists and semiologists commune darkly with the synchronic Idea.

The setting has the chic of utter bareness, like those expensive French restaurants where it is quite in order to anti-eat by toying with a hard-boiled egg and a stick of celery. There are only three canvas-and-metal chairs and a little table with a tape-recorder, against a dark background. Since the stage never contains more than two persons at a time (a character and a non-character), one chair seems austerely superfluous; but perhaps it is meant to represent the universal audience, the people in the body of the theatre and all other possible listeners, *i.e.* the anonymous *one* for whom the work of art exists. The work itself appears, at first sight, to consist of two successive dialogues. An undefined interrogator questions first a husband (in Act I) and then his wife (in Act II). But it soon transpires that this interrogator is neither a policeman nor a psychiatrist; he is the voice of the writer questioning the character in order to get the character to speak to himself or herself. The dialogues are disguised monologues.

Or, to put it the other way round, any monologue, any use of language, any attempt at understanding, involves a division of the self into Subject and Object. Language is that which, from the start, alienates the self from the self by introducing the presence of society into the inner sanctum. As soon as a baby lisps its first word, it is well on the way to schizophrenia. And so three chairs can represent the division within the speaking self, plus the listening ear of the third person. It is a pity, really, that Mme Duras weakened a little and introduced the tape-recorder as a piece of stage business. It is played back at one moment, so that the woman character can be surprised by the strangeness of her own speech, but she is surprised enough by it, as it is. The tape-recorder is surely a borrowing from *Krapp's Last Tape* or *Les Séquestrés d'Altona* and could have been dispensed with in the interests of greater purity.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO PLAY in the traditional sense, the under-lying subject inclines to the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

melodramatic. A murder has been committed. Claire Lanne, the wife, has slaughtered her deaf-and-dumb cousin, Marie-Thérèse, who kept house for her for years, and has dropped the various parts of the dismembered body on to trains passing under the local viaduct, which is in a provincial town outside Paris. The different sections have all been reassembled by the police from the far corners of France, except the head, with which she did something special that she refuses to divulge. The psychological action, such as it is, depends on the two questions: Why did she commit the murder when she had no particular animosity against her cousin? And what has she done with the head?

Act I, the interrogation of the husband which fills in the situation for us, is the longest *exposition* I have ever heard in the theatre. I wonder if Mme Duras borrowed the technique from Pinget's *L'Inquisitoire*, a whole "new novel" written in the question-and-answer form. This first act might, I think, have eliminated a fair proportion of the audience at the interval—"*Un coup de massue pour les philistins*!", I heard a gleeful French voice say—had they not had the promise of Peggy Ashcroft in Act II. To mention this is not to underestimate the brilliant performance of Maurice Denham, who had to give a non-boring display of boring minimality as the uninspired husband. He had married his wife because of her physical attractiveness, when she was on the rebound from a previous affair. She had quickly slumped into neurosis and he had consoled himself with a series of other women. Although he is not treated very harshly, he is obviously meant to come across as the humdrum foil to her interesting madness. He gives us a prosaic, commonsensical account of the circumstances in which the crime was committed, and expresses honest bewilderment at the realisation that he himself might well have been the murder victim.

HERE, ANOTHER LITERARY PARALLEL comes to mind. *Thérèse Desqueyroux*, probably the best of François Mauriac's novels, is about a husband with a murderous wife who cannot quite grasp the fact—nor indeed can she—that her crime is the outcome of higher spiritual sensitivity. But whereas Mauriac's heroine is meant to be a modern, inverted saint, Mme Duras's Claire Lanne is the Absurd heroine, whose maladjustment to life is "truer" than the apparent sanity of more balanced people. She has had many literary predecessors: Camus's Meursault and Caligula, for instance, or the heroes of some of Sartre's early short stories.

Actually, when Peggy Ashcroft gets into her stride in Act II, we realise that the action exists on two levels, the sentimental and the Absurd/phenomenological. Claire Lanne hails from Cahors where, as a pious young girl, she was seduced by a policeman with whom she had an ecstatic affair. She transferred her feminine devotion from God to the policeman, and when he was unfaithful to her she was crippled by traumatic shock. This is, to some extent, a repetition of the theme of the film, *Hiroshima mon amour*, where the heroine has been in love with a German during the Occupation. In the play, the name "Cahors" is repeated like a hypnotic invocation, just as "Nevers" was in the film. Mme Duras, in this respect, seems to be working off some personal obsession with a persistent memory.

BUT Claire Lanne could, perhaps, have become deranged without this external shock, through the now well-known process of the Existentialist revelation. Once the relationship of the consciousness with the world has been called into question, paralysis of the will can ensue, together with various other symptoms. Claire neglects the house (this is why the deaf-and-dumb cousin comes to stay) and sits most of the time thinking in the garden. She cleans her own room with maniacal thoroughness every day, presumably because this is the immediate area around her own body, but is indifferent to filth elsewhere. She has to have time, she feels, to allow the thoughts buzzing in her head to work themselves out as they will. She sometimes senses them trying to rise up through her skull and go off like gunshots. This is the gaseous nothingness of the *Pour-soi* passing through the material density of the *En-soi*. She sees other people as objects or animals. Marie-Thérèse is too fat and looks like a heifer from behind; the husband, Pierre, is too thin and tall, so that his head seems to scrape unbearably against the ceilings. This is the break-down of categories, when all the *En-soi* outside the consciousness begins to lose its recognisable, conventional contours. Claire has a horror of eating, particularly certain dishes such as stew, although Marie-Thérèse is an excellent cook; this is the mystery of the nourishment of the *Pour-soi* by lumps of *En-soi;* the real horror of transubstantiation is not that the bread and the wine should turn into flesh and blood, but that the spirit should be dependent on stew.

However, in this phenomenological nightmare, there are oases of reassurance. Claire is

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

devoted to a bed of mint in the garden, *de la menthe anglaise*, no doubt because of the pun, *l'amante anglaise*, which is meaningless in the context—but with that significant meaninglessness that some modern minds find intriguing. She is very fond of an illiterate Portuguese, Alfonso, a woodcutter, who is "perfect", perhaps through some coincidence between his simple personality and his function. Possibly, there is an echo-effect from his cutting up of the trees to the de-limbing of the body. To cut, to segment, to subdivide, to quarter—these are profoundly satisfactory activities, because the *Pour-soi* can have the impression of neatly conquering the *En-soi*. To prune a rose bush or a hedge is to indulge in herbaceous sadism, as we would probably realise if we could read the thoughts of gentle ladies armed with secateurs. Snip! that relieves my castration lust! Snip! that establishes the reign of mind over matter and subordinates the world to my *Pour-soi* in the proper Object/Subject relationship. . . .

In fact, I wonder if the main concept behind the play is not murder as a form of phenomenological poetry.[1] Claire—to whom Peggy Ashcroft gives a wonderfully musical, detached, upper-middle-class English pathos—presumably kills Marie-Thérèse in an explosion of Absurd disgust, as she might have killed anyone, or even her own body. Then she drops the parts of the corpse on to trains which distribute them to the different corners of the French "hexagon", whence they are reassembled by the police. Dismemberment is followed by reconstitution. The beautiful simplicity of this operation sets off by contrast the terrible problem which will beset us all on Judgment Day, when we shall have to retrieve our limbs from the multiplicity of conflicting forms they will have assumed in the evolving universe.

But the head is missing. Why did she not distribute it along with the rest? Only when she looked at the head, she says, did she realise that she had killed a human being. The head is that part of the *En-soi* which is the seat of the *Pour-soi*, and is therefore a particularly ambiguous piece of matter. This raises the question: what is the appropriate phenomenological thing to do with a head when you have cut it off? Claire travels up to Paris with the head in a bag and disposes of it in some way that clearly satisfies her. But she refuses to let on, and so, as in so many modern literary works, we are left with an unresolved suspense.

It is at this point that we, the playgoers or readers, must renounce the facilities of old-fashioned completed literature and stir our imaginations into healthy, creative activity. What would you do with a severed head . . . and you . . . and you? I confess that I have racked my brains in vain in the waking state. But I am going to be really modern and wait for the answer to come to me in a dream.

[1] My suspicion that the dismemberment is the deep, central image is increased by the ambiguity of the source. In an early version of the play, *Les Viaducs de Seine-et-Oise* (1960), Mme Duras refers to a real-life murder which is supposed to have occurred in 1954. The programme notes to *The Lovers of Viorne* quote another, different, real-life murder, which is said to have happened in 1966. The common element in both is the dropping of the body segments from a bridge on to trains and their distribution and reassembly. I don't remember what the papers said at the time, but it occurs to me that Mme Duras may have invented the "real-life" incident and drawn two plays and a novel from it, because of its disturbing poetic power.

In the second play, the character of the deaf-mute is certainly her invention, and one can see a justification for the choice of character. A deaf-mute, being deprived of language, cannot be a true *Pour-soi*, and therefore although she has a head, cannot be fully aware of the perpetually anguished emptying out of the Godless consciousness. She is said to have been "happy."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES & TOPICS

Notes on a Post-Imperial Journey

Israel, Cyprus, Iran — By MAX BELOFF

FOR THE HISTORIAN all journeys are somehow in search of evidence about his subject, or journeys of self-discovery. As one's interests shift and change, one's perspectives alter or are renewed. One's current obsession—mine with the decline and fall of the British Empire—links with past enthusiasms and points to future ones. Cyprus for three generations, Israel for barely one were part of the show; and a physical and mental legacy still subsists. Iran was not; but it was part of an informal empire—not of Britain so much as of British India. The British Ambassador's residence in Teheran, the work of Indian army engineers in the middle of the last century, the smaller but still impressive consular "compounds" that now serve the British Council in Isfahan and Shiraz, bear witness to a past that is not all that remote. Nor are the relics merely physical—in Iran, Britain still looms as a great power, not merely the ghost of one. It takes time to catch up with the speed of our abdication.

It is the super-Powers which claim the right to decide whether Israel's life-line—the Strait of Tiran—shall again be allowed to come under the menace of enemy guns. Britain's espousal of the United Nations Resolution of 1967, that dangerous piece of diplomatic make-believe, is not much held against her by the Israelis who have grown tolerant, and understand that compulsive arabophilia which seems so inescapable a part of the atmosphere of the Foreign Office. But when it comes to the islands that control the entrance to the gulf of Hormuz, the Iranians still want to know what Britain is going to do, and how she proposes to avert the conflict between Iranian and Arab which seems so likely a result of Britain's withdrawal from the gulf. In Cyprus despite the miles upon miles of pseudo-Aldershots, despite Commonwealth membership and driving on the left, it is not Britain that will decide whether the talk of Enosis will bring further bloodshed to Aphrodite's island; this is UN territory as Israel is determined never to be again. Sad young Finns and Austrians and Canadians enjoy the Sunday peace of the harbour cafés of Kyrenia while Cypriot Greek sailors practice obscure tricks with ropes from the ramparts of the Crusader castle in the consciousness of the ominous propinquity of the Turkish shore.

BUT ONE DOES NOT NEED to go to the Middle East in order to learn that its problems are unresolved and perhaps unresolvable. The vacuum created by Britain's withdrawal is plain and menacing. The nation-states struggle uneasily to find their own security-system. The notion of justice between Greek and Turk, Arab and Jew, Arab and Iranian even—for all the fine words of Moslem solidarity—is a sort of mirage. One cannot right a wrong without creating a new one. Where one stands depends upon one's choice of baseline. If there is any hope it must derive from a vision of the future and is thus subjective and insubstantial. Closer acquaintance with the scene is as likely to make one a hawk as a dove.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What the journey does is to give one a feeling for the time-span involved but that too is conditioned by one's own experience. I was always very weak on Greek—having started it too late in life owing to a parental weakness for "progressive education". So I had to do Greek history for my London matriculation, and if one does Greek history as a schoolboy, one is bound to get some kind of prejudice against the Persians (do the history books call them Iranians now?). They were the giant alien Asian imperial menace against whom the heroes of Thermopylæ and Marathon and Salamis fought; full of vain glory, their presumptuous monarchs were forced to abate their pretensions, and civilisation was saved. How could these barbarians have hoped to win?

When one gets to Persepolis, it looks a little different, particularly if one has soured a bit on Greek democracy and come to appreciate the imperial virtues. While it lasted—and it lasted as long as the British Empire did in its second phase—it must have been every bit as remarkable. Even Lutyens' New Delhi will not provide ruins of comparable magnificence; and the frieze of the tribute-bearers suggests that it could have been as awe-inspiring to be one of the subject peoples as to be part of a small unsubdued but intrinsically petty city-state. Perhaps one should have been taught history from the Persian side. Of course, the Greeks got their own back when Alexander burned it all down in the course of creating that Hellenistic world which since it provided the arena for Rome's expansion is the real substructure of the later Middle East. The Persian Empire was destroyed by fire and sword; it did not just melt away because the ruling people got tired and turned to socialism and the welfare state and the permissive society.

ONE CAN UNDERSTAND that the present (and in Iran literally omnipresent) Shah is trying to anchor his usurping dynasty to the remotest past by turning Persepolis into a backcloth for the celebrations of a somewhat problematic anniversary—two thousand five hundred years since the death of Cyrus. The cutting of new processional roads, the building of a hotel of monumental ugliness, the plans for a tented village ("field of the cloth of gold" style) to house the crowned heads and other State visitors to the celebrations: all this and a few Potemkin villages thrown in as a gesture towards development economics and social reform—all this one feels would have appealed to the great kings who lie buried here. It is impressive, monumental and at the same time a little unreal. Very immoderate, very un-Greek.

But although I was taught Greek history, Jewish history in an even more encapsulated form came first. For the Jews, the Greeks like the Romans were oppressors; those against whom one rightly rebelled in defence of true religion. But the Persians were liberators; it was Cyrus who after conquering Babylon let the Jewish people go back to their own country—back to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple. And now that Jerusalem is Jewish again—and the Jewish quarter destroyed by Hussein's soldiery is rising from the ground once more—all this is very meaningful.[1]

[1] For it takes a UNO diplomat or bureaucrat to believe that Jerusalem can ever be divided again; though one's historical and religious sentiments are indeed given a rude jolt by the circus that American Jewish tourists have made out of the newly-created plaza by the Western Wall. Unhappy is the country that needs tourism to get its balance of payments right!

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And not Cyrus only. For Purim can now be celebrated in undivided Jerusalem, and Purim is Esther and her uncle Mordecai; and Esther was married to Ahasuerus who may have been Xerxes, or perhaps Xerxes' father, and so another of the Shah's ancestors by adoption. In the eyes of Jews, Persians stand high. For the archaeologist or scholar or historian, Pasagardae—the tomb of Cyrus—is outclassed utterly by the grandeurs of Persepolis; but because of the beauty, peace and remoteness of the site (and because of Cyrus), it was still the highlight of this journey.

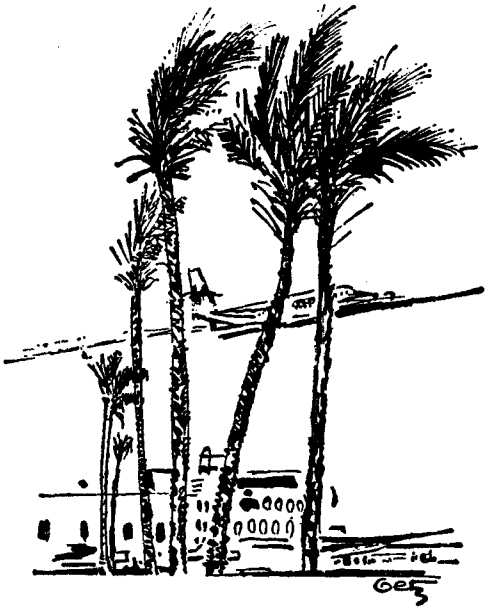
IT IS A FURTHER TOPIC for reflection that whereas many peoples have erupted into the Middle East since ancient times—Greeks and Romans, Arabs, Tartars, Turks and Franks—the Persians and the Jews are still around. Iran and Israel are the only two countries which in one form or another existed then and exist today. They are also in their different ways the two dynamic and thrusting countries of the area—Teheran is only a bigger Tel-Aviv. At that point the likeness ceases. Israel grows despite an ideology of egalitarianism and much egalitarian practice (too much in some fields, higher education, for instance). It has to rely upon non-material incentives, and on the bad conscience of American Jews who are willing to pay a ransom for going on living in the diaspora. Iran has no perceptible ideology except for an ingrained (and, one suspects, rather xenophobic) nationalism and much less obvious entrepreneurial talent. So far from being egalitarian, it has a spread of income levels which would seem exaggerated not just by Israeli standards but by those of almost any advanced country. Despite the long tradition of craftsmanship—and tourism has given the artisanate what may be a long new lease of life—it does not easily produce good quality work at the factory level. (On the contrary.) Nor does it seem to have the infrastructure necessary for massive industrial growth: few railways; few good roads; a telephone system so overloaded that only people with influence can make a call between two principal cities at less than twenty-four hours notice; a postal system which no one seriously expects to deliver one's letters; and the worst-run airport in the world. (And I have landed at Sydney, so I know how bad an airport can be.) And yet it prospers.

It cannot only be the oil. Other countries have oil revenues and still remain poor. It must be something else; the native intelligence of the race, and the driving ambition of government which means the Shah and his circle. It is very reminiscent of Kemal in Turkey, and that is a bad omen when one sees how much of Turkey's secular revolution from above has run into traditionalist sands. In Iran, too, one has the sense that all the medieval fanaticisms of Islam are only just round the corner. (Why doesn't Women's Lib take an interest in Iran; why should only men go to the cinema?) Such pet projects of the Shah as the English-medium Pahlevi University at Shiraz are clearly subject to much traditionalist opposition and bureaucratic sabotage. But in a country where no one talks politics and where everything seems to go on just under the surface the visitor is all too likely to get things wrong. It is easier to concentrate on antiquities than to wait for answers to questions about the reality of land-reform.

Among Israelis most things can be discussed—even the equally powerful obscurantism of their religious. But they have their own brands of pretence, and perhaps no country at war with enemies bent upon its total destruction can take an altogether free and easy line with inquirers.

Still, it is not merely the case that Israel and Iran, taken together and contrasted with their neighbours, help by virtue of the idiosyncratic nature of their economic and social development to produce a very sceptical attitude to the theorists about these things. Both break many rules, though not the same ones. There is also the almost equally curious

(continued on page 66)



PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Berlin

THE *summer semester at the Free University was generally considered to be "rather quiet"—for nothing very much happened, apart from the student strike in the English department against the teaching of Beowulf, and the physical assault by young men of the Marxist Left on the socialist professor who had been one of the fathers of the whole University Reform movement in the 1960s.*

There were only a handful in Professor Alexander Schwan's seminar—entitled: "Theory and Practice of Democratisation as the Task of an Emancipatory Political Science"—when about a hundred outsiders stormed into Lecture Hall B of the Otto Suhr Institute. Were they the democratisers or the emancipators? In any case they were not much interested in theory, and they went about their practical work with dispatch. Schwan became the target of "Farbeier", and what coloured paint was left over was used to smear "Schwan=Schwein" on the walls, and "Schwan—Raus" on the windows. Then with a cry of "Schmeiss-raus", they seized the Professor by hand and foot and held him by the neck at the window-sill.

At this point a bit of theory intruded, and halted the progress of the attack. One of the Revoluzzer *leaders, Goetz Aly, made the point, and convincingly, that to throw the bourgeois professor out of the window could not exactly be construed as an act of Emancipatory Political Science. So they desisted. But the next day, the left-wing University administration was reluctantly forced to "turn to the State", i.e. to inform the Public Prosecutor of the violence and the charges that were going to be preferred.*

The attack on Professor Schwan was only the most ironic of the recent series of "Pig Hunts" (Schweinejagden) that have been taking place. Members of the so-called "Red Cells", who now dominate the student movement, feel free to victimise whom they please. Dr Bitterling, the Anglicist, was imprisoned in his rooms for refusing to discontinue the requirements for the study of the history of the English language. The Professor of Mathematics, Dr Hanfried Lenz, who was locked into a conference room, fought his way, together with some colleagues, through the barriers of students, although later (according to the student paper) some of the self-appointed prison wardens regretted that they had hesitated "to go on and deal with those reactionaries. . . ." Even the left-wing university President, Dr Kreibich, has been detained against his will, although he later found good educational (and ideological) reasons for having "remained so long at an interesting all-night session. . . ." Some of the more moderate Marxists have been trying to convince the young storm-troopers of the various "Red Cells" that the necessary attack on the Bourgeois University does not necessarily mean assault and battery on Bourgeois Professors. In the Otto Suhr Institute, where 2000 so-called Politologists are enrolled (capacity: 450), it has never been very difficult to enlist a commando of enthusiastic bullies.

It was the "enthusiasm" which struck Professor Friedrich Heer, the Left Catholic historian, and he was careless enough to suggest that he was reminded of the angry hordes of monastic Iconoclasts in the Byzantine past. The students shouted and screamed at him in uncontrollable anger.

THE TENSIONS *of the confrontation have at times been fatal. The death of Germany's famous sociologist, T. W. Adorno, two years ago, was not unconnected with the same ironic ferocity with which "the children of the Revolution have been devouring its fathers. . . ." In January 1969 the S.D.S. occupied Adorno's Institute in Frankfurt—and he had to call the Police to expel the students who only yesterday had been so grateful to him for having taught them "Marxian dialectics." In April 1969 a number of Women's Lib. students strip-teased in front of him, and he had to break off his lecture. In July of that year, a month before his death, he barely managed to find the strength to be a witness in the hearings against the Occupiers. He died on 6 August. And now his long-time friend, Carla Henius, has just written in the magazine* Melos *that the painful events of those years had so "hurt him and broken him that they probably caused his death. . . ."*

Needless to say, many scholars have showed themselves reluctant to face this tension and danger. In Berlin and elsewhere, lecture courses and seminars have been discontinued, and chairs given up. Professor Jürgen Habermas will no longer be teaching at Frankfurt, and has finally decided to withdraw into the quieter precincts of the Max-Planck Institute.

YET IN MANY RESPECTS *the lines of ideological conflict have been changing on the German battle-ground. There have been an increasing number of books and pamphlets which express both the disenchantment and revulsion in German intellectual circles against the New Left and its depredations on the university scene. Jean Amery, in his new book, calls sharp attention to what, in less subtle analysis, would be simply taken to be*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

. . . Letter from Berlin

the "typical elements of a German Fascist mentality." Gerhard Szczesny, a man of socialist-humanist-atheist persuasions, finds rather the totalism of "Christian Absolutism" in the revival of dogma, faith, infallibility, discipline. Sebastian Haffner, too, writing in the left-wing Konkret, *detects "God and the Devil" where the revolutionaries think they see Progress and Reaction; and Haffner now concedes that for many there never was an interest in reform or reconstruction—only "destruction", above all of the University. Much of the tone of the new critical comment is due to the courageous activities of several new organisations, especially the liberal-conservative-socialist front of Academics for Freedom in which Professor Richard Löwenthal has been so prominent and effective. (So naive, or innocent, or mentally backward are some of the fellow-travellers of the New Revolutionism that the leftish Vice-President of the Free University in Berlin could actually ask me, "Can you explain it to me? This Löwenthal is such a clever fellow, such a brilliant scholar, is so very intelligent—how come he's so critical, how come he's not with us? . . . .")*

PART OF THE NEW STRENGTH *of the liberal resistance movement comes precisely from those younger reformists who have seen how the "new, radical methods" have been misused by the extremist groups of the Left. As Arnulf Baring, a young Berlin professor, put it to me, "I am not an apocalyptic prophet of doom, and I don't believe in the catastrophic collapse of institutions—but the ideological subversion of the university has now taken on horrible proportions. The so-called 'bourgeois' lectures are boycotted, the simple-minded seminars in Marxist dogma are overcrowded. The idea of pluralism in intellectual life is dismissed contemptuously. The notion that an open mind is necessary for the effective search for truth in any field—this is publicly proclaimed to be reactionary, absurd, and unnecessary. . . . By now those self-styled little 'Red Cells' are in substantial control in almost every sector of academic life. Yes, more and more teachers and students are beginning to see the enormity of the danger—but that's because the danger has become so much more enormous!"*

From one day's reading of the press in Germany I culled the following items. In the University of Münster, two professors who were the leaders of rival political factions were involved in a physical altercation over the keys to a lecture hall; one of them (the "reactionary liberal," of course) was later bombarded with tomatoes. In the Ruhr University of Bochum there was a protest from the Rector against the mounting wave of "insults, recriminations, psycho-terror, intimidation, and telephone threats of murder" which is overwhelming normal academic life. In Berlin an additional three summonses were issued by the Public Prosecutor against University President Kreibich for his formal support of certain alleged illegalities on campus; Kreibich denounced this as "juridical formalism"; but it still brought the number of subpoenas issued in the university crisis during the last thirty months to 386. In Munich a new Rector was finally elected after Spartacists broke up the previous two electoral attempts; Dr Lobkowiscz, a political philosopher, was elected by 259 votes (out of 400), while no less than 1200 policemen guarded the Residenz *like a fortress. A senior professor at Karlsruhe refused to accept an appointment to the new "Marxianised" university of Bremen on the grounds that he was not prepared to teach "a socialist mathematics." I found similar items involving the universities in Heidelberg, Hamburg, and Marburg.*

A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE *to the grave dangers of organised illiberalism, based on the Cult of Violence and Unreason, is reinforced by the fashionable Manichean criticism of "bourgeois democracy" from all the modish German intellectuals (excepting only, perhaps, Günter Grass and his friends).*

This species of mendacious exaggeration is, needless, to say, representative of the New Left, or Radical Chic, type of cultural comment throughout the West. (America is fascist; Chicago is Auschwitz; the middle class is murderous; white culture is degenerate; Europe is rotten; revolution, like ripeness, is all.) In Die Zeit, *the important Hamburg weekly of political and literary comment, Rudolph Walter Leonhardt (who is its Features Editor) pondered the troubled future of the Free University of Berlin, now under Left-Marxist assault. He seemed to be more pleased than concerned that it was "on its last legs." For after all, as he said (in an error so gross it was tantamount to the purest fabrication), "there has been no Western institution of higher learning and scholarship in the 20th century which was so dependent on the 'front-line spirit', on its American subventions, on groups that were in power. . . ."*

A week later (in Die Zeit *for 16 July 1971) came the appropriate reply from Professor Richard Löwenthal, the distinguished socialist writer on international affairs. He called*

(continued on page 66)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(continued from page 65)

Leonhardt's charge "monstrous." He asked Leonhardt (and got no reply): "The most dependent in the 20th century? More dependent than the schools under the fascist dictatorship in Spain, than the dogma-bound religious universities in South America, than the Berlin University of the Kaiser period, than the German universities in Hitler's Third Reich. . . ." Quite the contrary. The independence of the Free University, since its establishment in the U.S. sector of West Berlin in 1948 and its subsequent support through the Ford Foundation, has been complete and unquestionable. (In the F.U.'s Institute for Political Science, Löwenthal himself has been a well-known critic of U.S. foreign policy, especially on Viet Nam. His colleague, Ossip K. Flechtheim, with whom he sharply disagrees, has led a research team in radical confrontation with the "Cold War.")

But facts seldom reach through an ideological screen of polemical faith. Our own institutions must *be the very worst! They are* not merely *imperfect and needful of reform. They are* not only *bad and vicious and evil, but* more so *than any such institution is elsewhere —or indeed than ever was! The German ideologists have at least this in common with their U.S. counterparts—things German, like things American, must either be the Best or the Worst in the world. They both have the World Champion's complex: they must always lead the league, if not in Good then in Evil. . . .*

ON THE EXTREME LEFT *there has been a serious regrouping, and it has at last brought the "wild ones" under the influence of the orthodox Communist movement. (The once "independent" and "new" University Left has finally been converted to old "solidarity with the Soviet Union" and now even makes abject apologies for the Red Army's invasion of Czechoslovakia!) With the disintegration of the old S.D.S. a vacuum was created, and now a new revolutionary group has appeared with some 40 centres in German colleges and universities. It is called, with characteristic originality, "Spartakus", declares itself to be the only Marxist group with "clear perspectives", and has no doubt that "the future belongs to us". For a while it did seem that nothing could survive in the wreckage of the S.D.S., torn between factionalism (Maoists, Trotskyites, Anarchists, and Anti-Authoritarians) and Hippie-Do-It-Now hooliganism. The Spartacists stand for "discipline", oppose "blind actionism", call for the complete inculcation of authentic Marxism at all the universities. Once again a new German generation—they come now, not in decades or years, but in semesters —has moved to the fore, and it appears to be even more ignorant and mindless than the one before. The* Spartakus *leader, Christoph Strawe, who is 23, recently attended a conference in East Berlin of the Communist youth organisation, the "FDJ", and reports that he is "deeply impressed". Very impressive, too, for the Spartacists are "the achievements of the DDR in the East", such "terrific fellows" as Albert Norden (Ulbricht's old propaganda chief), and Moscow's new foreign-policy lines. What worries them a little about the Marxism in the East is the depressing greyness of the life that has come after the Revolution. "Well", one young Spartacist leader confessed, "we just told them—Comrades, why don't you take a great pot of paint and simply paint over all the houses and fences in all the villages, and then they won't look so terribly sad! . . ."*

Well, at least the idea of Potemkin Villages has not been erased from historical memory.

M.J.L.

(continued from page 63)

fact of their own style of peaceful co-existence. Both are non-Arab islands in an Arab sea. But while the Israelis are divided from their Arab neighbours and their Arab fellow-citizens (who share even in the "occupied areas" in the country's growth) by religion, Iran is a moslem country even though its brand of Islam is different from that of most Arabs. It can, therefore, only co-operate with Israel (as it does economically and technically on a very large scale) in ways which do not imply political recognition, and which involve the Israelis in accepting Iranian denunciations of their policies at the United Nations and elsewhere.[2] Indeed as one looks at these relations more closely one gets the feeling that Samuel Johnson's assertion that men are never more innocently occupied than when making money must be equally true of nations. Money is not the root of all evil but often the only hope of a more sensible and less dangerous way of life. Iranian oil transferred by pipeline across Israeli territory from Eilat to Ashkelon and shipped from there to Rumania:

[2] An element of childishness enters into non-recognition. Israeli diplomats carry visiting cards without their official rank, as well as the normal kind. The Israeli Embassy has not even a brass-nameplate—only a street number. But one is told that any taxi-driver will know where to find it without the need to give an address.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that is the kind of thing that may one day put ideology in its place. And there is much more besides. But a country which can, while being a member of CENTO, allow the Russians to build and equip their first big steel mill does not find this lesser balancing trick too difficult. There is about Iranian politics a certain overt Machiavellianism which may perhaps derive from a long history of being other people's victims. We may one day find that the Israelis are not far behind. Mendacity may be an instrument of survival; and survival comes first.

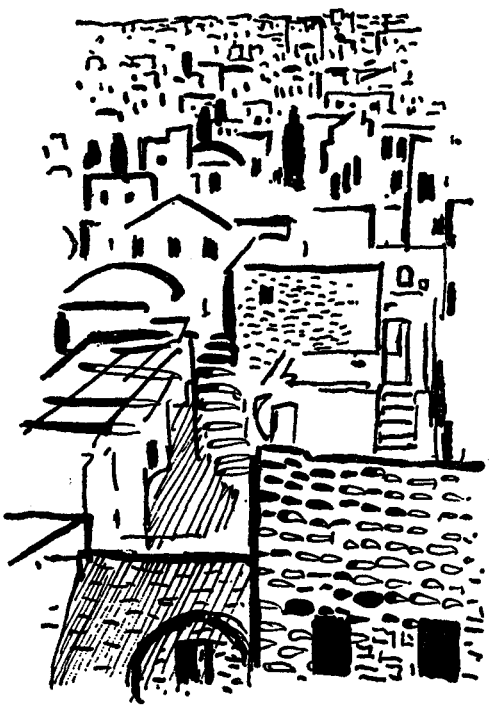
IN SEEKING TO LINK present prosperity and ambitions with a glorious past, the Iranians have a rather easier task than the Israelis because they have more than one era of artistic glory to resuscitate. When the centre of Isfahan has been restored to its seventeenth-eighteenth century aspect, as it is being transformed by the fiat of the Shah, it will not merely be one of the most attractive townscapes anywhere, it will also (or should) promote the sense of national pride and achievement which is central to what is now being attempted.

Because of the long interlude of the diaspora when the Israelis' ancestors were for the most part in other lands, there has until recently been little interest in much post-Biblical history or archaeology, as though history ended with Bar Kochba and only began again with Ben Gurion. Now that national identity can be taken for granted, there is a more relaxed attitude. The Herodian New Testament period, the Romans, and even the Crusaders, are getting their due need of attention. And this is important; above all the Crusaders are important, if only that their ghost must be exorcised if Israel itself is to be regarded as more than another temporary lodgement of Europe on the shores of Asia. Their physical monuments are so impressive—to look from Belvoir across the Jordan valley to the far-off hills where the Royal Jordanian army and the guerrilla bands fight it out, or to see the outlines of Nimrod, the last outpost before Damascus, is to find the right questions to ask, if not at once (or easily) the answers.

Cyprus—the castles of Kyrenia and Kantara—help to put the issue into perspective. Richard Coeur de Lion felt the attraction of the Middle East centuries before Disraeli brought the English back again. And in Cyprus, the Venetians also. One supposes that the great Venetian cathedral of Famagusta (now a mosque) is another monument to the fragility of Empires. But Italy survives, and the Italians may yet again play an important part in the eastern Mediterranean. But that is modern history; when Shakespeare wrote Othello it was contemporary history.

The Greeks were there, before; in Italy and in the Middle East. The mosaics of the monastery of Santa Catarina in Israeli-held Sinai form a link with Justinian's Ravenna. If it is true that the villagers infeodated to the monastery descend from Roumelian slaves brought there in the times of the Byzantine Empire, we may wonder less at current migrations.

THERE IS NO ENDING to the story; and even the débâcle of Britain's imperial power may be overshadowed by the new evidence of economic growth and national awakening. Tourists come and parade among the monuments, and if they are Americans they find the succession of centuries and dynasties hard to grasp or distinguish. At least they are unconscious of their own areas of ignorance. For the European—with Athens and Jerusalem both imprinted on his consciousness—detachment is harder and the sense of ignorance overwhelming. For all that Spengler or Toynbee have written, we really do not know what makes peoples flourish or decay. And the economists talk about "take-off". . . .



PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Aristophanes & the Frontiers of the Fictional

On a New Translation — By JOHN HOLLOWAY

I HAVE LONG THOUGHT that more could be learnt about literature from Aristophanes, than from any other author whatever. This is not because he is supreme in quality. He is not supreme in quality—not quite—but it is not from supreme writers that most is to be learnt: rather from the uniquely distinctive test-case.

A glance at Aristophanes ought to be enough to show that he unites animation and variety as probably no one else does. Here are a few lines from the *Women at the Thesmophoria:*

SERVANT: *Let all be silent . . .*
The Muses have come, in my Lord's
House they are making their songs:
Fragrant the tranquil air
Tranquil the wave of the sea. . . .
MNESILOCHUS *(a citizen): Bzbzbzbzba-ll-lls. . . .*
EURIPIDES: *Shut up! What d'you mean?*
SERVANT: *Let the birds of the air be asleep.*
No creature to stir in the forest. . . .
MNESILOCHUS: *Bzbzbzbzballocks'nball-lls.*
SERVANT: *Our leader mellifluous Agathon*
Is going to. . . .
MNESILOCHUS: *Not get fucked?*
SERVANT: *Who the hell said that?*
EURIPIDES: *'Fragrant the tranquil air'*

Aristophanes' lyrical verse often teeters, as here, on the very brink of burlesque. At the same time, it invites another level of attention also. Lyric beauty and senseless horror in Euripides are matched by lyric beauty and Rabelaisian satire in Old Comedy. Each demands a paradoxical range of response which often seems near to the hysterical: the near-hysteria of wonderfully acute insight.

For all that, one can see why Aristophanes the test case is less known than a test case deserves. You will not find the Greek for *bzbzbzbzba-ll-lls* in your old school-lexicon (if you had one): just a note at the front about "the omission of words used only by authors not read in schools." When I settled down in middle age to read Aristophanes in Greek (not *faute-de-mieux*, I may note), the first thing I had to do was buy the big Liddell & Scott. Even that gives limited guidance as to whether my obscenities (above) or Mr Dickinson's come the closer to our original. Translations before Mr Dickinson's[1] are non-starters. They offer a (scandalised) *"No No!"* or something about being "debauched" or "pedicated," for Mnesilochus's interruptions about Agathon, the notorious invert. Perhaps Mr Dickinson, whose Virgil translation is already widely known, has been waiting, ever since hunting in the school-lexicons first let him down, for the time when you could print all Aristophanes' rude words (and so far as I can see, one or two more) in a paper-back. If so, it is lucky for us all. No one is ever completely satisfied with anyone else's translations, but the simple fact is that Dickinson, who must be both a poet and a Rabelaisian, has done well, with lyric, repartee, and ribaldry too, in a field where by and large the rest are nowhere. As a result, an astonishing and irreplaceable author has suddenly become available in bulk, and to us all. This is fame.

ARISTOPHANES' ANIMATION AND VARIETY, astonishing as they are in themselves, demand also an effort of comprehension, because the plays leave a modern reader with the strangest of all impressions that a master-work can possibly leave: the impression that what one is reading is somehow something *other than literature*. Of course, this initial formulation of the paradox will not stand: but it points the way to a major fact, the clue to which lies in Aristophanes' last and probably least-read work: the *Ploutos*.

The early plays are set very much in the present when they were written. *The Acharnians* opens with an Athenian citizen meeting the

[1] *Plays*. By ARISTOPHANES. Translated by PATRIC DICKINSON. 2 vols. Oxford, £1.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ambassadors coming home from Persia where they had been sent to get help for the war with Sparta. *The Knights* opens with a slave who caricatures Athens' strong-arm man Cleon. In *The Clouds,* a citizen is setting off to learn the tricks of the trade from Socrates. In *The Frogs* we have Dionysus and Heracles, but their appearance on stage is directly related to the death of Euripides the year before the play was first performed. *The Thezmophoriazusai* starts off with Euripides and his father-in-law going past Agathon's house at dawn. To be sure, what happens later, in every case, seems to transform the steadily harsher realities of the Peloponnesian War into extravaganza and fantasy: the start, though, is in the (literally) pedestrian realities through which the audience have come on their way to the theatre.

Ploutos was the god of wealth, and the legend that (like many more ordinary persons) he was conceived on the ground after a celebration is recounted, following Homer, in Hesiod's *Theogony*. Hesiod records that Ploutos was a great traveller, and doubtless Aristophanes did not have to invent that he was blind and dressed in rags. But that the citizen Chremylos found him doddering through the streets of Athens, and took him home and got his sight restored to him, is something new. Also, its starting-point is a starting-point not in fact, but datelessly, and in a fiction. It is not easy to think of a clear earlier example of true fiction in any literature. The myths of Homer or the tragedians may be dateless, but they do not offer themselves as *made up*. The *Ploutos* does. It seems as if with this play, Aristophanes discovered the meaning we now attach to the opening formula "once upon a time": which means, of course, almost the opposite of what it says.

One may put the matter another way, by saying that Aristophanes' earlier plays (all save the last one in fact) begin by offering themselves not as fiction but as parable. Etymology aside, the New Testament parable is not fictional. It carries an allegorical truth, but its obvious and initial offer is to narrate a truth which is literal: "there was a certain rich man . . . there was a certain creditor. . . ." Sometimes, there is as it were an introductory catch-word: "behold." "Hearken, *behold,* a sower went forth to sow. . . ." (*Mark,* 4.3); and in English, as in the Greek original (idoù), the second word seeming to correct the first, carries the sense of seeing, not listening. So it hints at truth not fiction. In principle you can "look" at any fact. To a fiction, you can

DAVID CAUTE

The Occupation

A novel £2·00

The Illusion

An essay £2·50

The Demonstration

A play £1·40

This brilliant trilogy, with the general title of *The Confrontation,* describes at several levels the central dilemma of the politically committed writer and the confrontation between the Old Left and the New.

'So many exciting arguments, so much genuine conflict, such sheer exhilaration of intellect'
Dennis Potter, *The Times*

Just published

DAVID FAIRHALL

Russia Looks to the Sea

David Fairhall, Defence Correspondent of *The Guardian,* analyses the recent emergence of Russia as a major sea power and the implications of this for the West.
Just published £3·95

BARRY RECKORD

Does Fidel Eat More Than Your Father?

A convincing picture of what living under Castro's revolution really means. The first book by the Jamaican playwright of *Skyvers* and *Don't Gas The Blacks.*
Just published £2·10

André Deutsch

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only listen. *Luke*, 13.2, reads "behold, there was a certain man before Him, which had the dropsie": the catch-word for a parable does duty equally well to introduce the facts of direct experience.

In his last play, however—at the start—one sees Aristophanes taking, or beginning to take, what is perhaps the most momentous decision the literary artist ever took in all history. In effect, he took the decision to say to his audience what some parents say every night to their children: *let's pretend*, and I will tell you a story. Needless to say, before the *Ploutos* had gone very far, Aristophanes was busily working his way back to reality, writing about the Egyptian allies, the courtesan Lais, Timotheus, rising prices, and contemporary political chicanery. As for what happened later, one may say that playwrights, novelists, and other purveyors of fictions have been diligently working their way back from the splendid game of let's-pretend, to reality, ever since. Prior to the *Ploutos*, though, Aristophanes had had no call to do any working-back. You cannot work back to something, if you start right within it; and the distinction between Old Comedy, and the New Comedy of Menander, lies essentially not in the presence or absence of the parabasis, or of topical invective, literary satire, or even individual historical characters, but in a fundamentally new kind of task undertaken by the author, and the replacement of seeming fable for seeming truth.

HENCE, I BELIEVE, the obscure sense which I referred to earlier, that the main body of Aristophanes' work is somehow "other than literature." That obscure sense is one's dawning awareness of how, in reading him, one is going back behind a momentous creative frontier. What made Aristophanes begin to cross it, in our direction? Perhaps there is a clue when, fifteen years after Athens' final defeat by Sparta, the author makes his blind god say, when they offer to restore his sight, "don't do that, don't do that: *I don't want to see again*"—and the see-verb carries the sense of seeing confidently, of facing the facts or the light. Chremylos, the worthy citizen, can hardly believe his ears. Later in the play, he gives good reason himself for such a preference:—

> . . . the way life goes for us mortal men nowadays, who would not take it for insane, or for under a curse in fact?

These formidable words come in what, taken all together, is a happy play: a tremendous declaration, by this elderly but inexpugnable poet who had known the great days, that he yielded nothing and despaired of nothing. Menander was a child of five when, at Chaeronea, the Macedonian army under Philip put an end to Athenian independence. He came to maturity in the year the refugee democrat Demosthenes, pursued to sanctuary at Poros by the Macedonians, finally took the poison he had long carried about with him, waiting for the day. Quite like modern times.

THE COMEDIES OF MENANDER were until recent years almost entirely lost. But enough is now available for one to see clearly: he stood well on our own side of the momentous frontier Aristophanes reached late in life. Vellacott, in his translation,[2] points out that the one play to survive more or less intact, *The Bad-Tempered Man*, opening with the words "Imagine this place is Phyle in Attica", sets itself in what had been the last hill-pocket of Athenian resistance to Sparta. Perhaps we are even meant to see the misanthropic, disgruntled farmer, Cnemon, always at work in these high stony fields, as a relic of those far-off days. But if so, the rich young man from town who turns up, not to seduce Cnemon's daughter but to offer her honourable wedlock, should hardly be seen as illustrating the realities of the new age. Rather, he goes with what happened in the fragmentary *Arbitration*, where Charisios immensely complicates his life by raping a virgin in the dark at a public festival—only, it turns out to have been his wife. In *The Samian Woman*, a father commands his son to marry—the very girl that the son has already made his mistress in secret, and given a child to.

Not, in the least, that Menander is pure fantasy. Charisios and those who have the task of finding out the truth about the festival and then getting him to believe it, are all made to behave with marked insight, acumen, and realistically conceived intelligence. The same with characters in *The Samian Woman* and everywhere else. Of course, we are encountering almost the oldest of literary conventions. The author sets up an initial situation which is wildly improbable, and belongs to fantasy (to the world of "imagine this place . . .") not reality. Then, he induces his audience to "suspend disbelief" by treating an unreal

[2] *Menander, Plays and Fragments.* By MENANDER; *The Characters.* By THEOPHASTUS. Translated by PHILIP VELLACOTT. Penguin Classics, 37½p.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

situation as if it were a real one. One may gloss over the purpose of this, and of course, Menander was able to write about interesting matters ("themes") like generosity of mind, forgiveness, etc. But, at the same time, something else is clear. What he did was to make it possible for an Athenian to get his mind off Demosthenes: to be, at least temporarily, more interested in not-life than in life. Contrary to what some think, this is a perfectly defensible position. "Not-life" may mean, simply, art. But one ought not to avoid seeing what that position is. Menander has a good claim to be the inventor of "literature": of writing that was "not relevant." In older parlance, he was the first escapist author.

THIS TRAIN OF THOUGHT could easily lead to a complete misunderstanding about Aristophanes, if it is not recognised that he did not write manifestos. Menander simply inverted, all the way along, the quite non-manifesto structure of relation to reality, on which Aristophanes based his work. In effect, *The Clouds* begins parable-wise: "Behold, a certain Athenian went down to the house of Socrates." The situation offers itself as reality. What happens in the development is that we see a Socrates who studies debt-avoidance and the habits of fleas, and is taught all he knows by the clouds. The moon can come down out of the sky and go into a box. Logic is a real person who can feel sick. The personages of Athenian public life—notably the tragic poets—have all suffered the humiliating and excruciating punishment decreed for adulterers (or perverts). In other words, Aristophanes initially sets up a real situation, which presents itself *prima facie* as a truth, not a fiction. Immediately the development begins, reality is progressively transformed into a sizzling fantasy, where what is possible is not only every variety of extravagance and impossibility, but all those things in a close-packed juxtaposition which itself makes fantasy of the second order. The wonderful walled sky-city of *The Birds*; Lysistrata's Athens, agonised, gynocratic and sexless (no copulation, I mean); Aeschylus and Euripides duelling in Hades to a chorus of Frogs all illustrate how the initially real situation is developed by the canons of the not-real.

Which may be a catchy way to put the matter: but one which conceals an asymmetry in the case which is key to it as a whole. The argument ran: Menander took the *not-real* and treated it after the manner of the *real;* and his purpose was to encourage suspension of

Norman Mailer

THE PRISONER OF SEX

"*Mailer's best book. His recent books have all been testaments of a sort, and this one is the most intimate, inclusive and deeply felt of all. It says more about love and sex than Armies of the Night said about politics—and today they may be even more important . . . What Mailer has tried to do here is to write a love poem. Let us hope that women never become so liberated that it is impossible to write love poems to them*" New York Times

£2·00

Mordecai Richler

ST URBAIN'S HORSEMAN

"*One of the best novels of the year. Inventive and outrageously funny . . .*" Newsweek

"*What a rich pleasure this novel is . . . The stuff of life, the joy and terror alike, surges through St Urbain's Horseman*" New York Times Book Review

£2·50

Weidenfeld & Nicolson
5 Winsley St London W1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

disbelief in the not-real, in order that we may temporarily give our minds to the not-real, as if it were real indeed. But it will not do simply to reverse this, and say of Aristophanes that (at least before the *Ploutos*) he takes the *real,* and treats it after the manner of the *not-real,* in order to encourage not suspension of disbelief but suspension of *belief.* Self-evidently, none of the plays invites its audience to believe that Athens, Sparta, Cleon, the Assembly, Euripides or anything else does not exist—pointless, meaningless. The fact is, "after the manner of the not-real" is a trick phrase. The not-real has no manner, no canons: it is anything, everything, nothing: and this is the key. Aristophanes does not treat his initial, realistic situation after the manner of the not-real. Simply, he has no need of Menander's dodge. Along with being realistic when he likes, he can be everything else as well. Nikarchos the informer (*Acharnians,* 910) comes in as a convincing psychological study; but within only a few lines, the characteristic Aristophanic modulations begin. A beetle with a lighted candle-wick could burn up Piraeus in a flash: and in a flash also, they pack the informer, like crockery, in a crate; but chant an exquisite antiphonal lyric as they do so. This one example of paradoxical multifariousness must stand for many. Aristophanes passes the current life of his day through a prism at once comic, satiric, philosophical, and lyric. It emerges as a spectrum, fantastic and insane, many-coloured and dazzling.

THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT syllabics and so forth, where Mr Dickinson, in his Introduction, writes how he has tried to reproduce the metrical effects of Aristophanes. On the whole, one cannot attach much weight to it, and perhaps that is not important. Aristophanes was the greatest metrical virtuoso of all poets who have ever written. One after another, his plays astonish with a glittering non-stop medley of patter-lines, doggerel, vigorous colloquialism, stately iambic (or nearly), parody, Gilbert & Sullivan rollick, and lyric of extraordinary beauty. The great metrical formality and yet variety of the tragedians are as nothing compared to his. Every play conforms to intricate semi-ritual patterns (though this was once understood in an excessively mechanical way), and the great central chorus, or parabasis, interrupts the dramatic illusion—or rather, half-illusion—with an elaborate metrical multiple-mirror effect, usually grouped round

Arthur Koestler

THE CASE OF THE MIDWIFE TOAD

Koestler has written an intriguing piece of scientific detection about a great evolutionary controversy. He has always been interested in the tragic story of an Austrian experimental biologist, named Dr. Paul Kammerer, whose suicide in 1926 came as the climax to an evolutionary battle between the followers of Lamarck, who believed that acquired characteristics could be inherited, and the neo-Darwinists. The story that emerges is not, as Koestler expected, the tragedy of a man who betrayed his calling, but the vindication of a man who was in all probability himself betrayed. It is a masterly exposition of the controversies surrounding evolutionary theory, both then and today.

£2:50 / Illustrated

Hutchinson

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a one-breath sentence delivered in a rush. B. B. Rogers' Loeb translation, now nearly fifty years old, reproduced a good deal of Aristophanes' metrical fireworks: but the result was to display dexterity at the price of both succinctness and life. Mr Dickinson will probably leave the Greek-less reader thinking that Aristophanes wrote mainly in free verse of one kind or another, but the price is a small one for his impression of matchless animation; and some of his versions of the great lyrics (particularly the heavenly ones in *The Birds*) are true poetry.

Aristophanes seems to me to remain incomparably better than Mr Dickinson; but he, in his turn, seems incomparably better than any earlier translator. To have made accessible a great and peculiarly inaccessible author, whose *oeuvre* raises, as no other quite does, questions about the very nature of the literary enterprise —must a man achieve more than that in one lifetime?

From Caligari to Kitsch

By Richard Mayne

FROM CALIGARI TO HITLER was the late Siegfried Kracauer's attempt to prove that German films, from the silent era onwards, prefigured the cruel neuroses that led to the Third Reich. Looking again at some of those early "masterpieces" lends colour to his thesis. Macabre, ponderous, guilt-ridden, full of metaphysical concern with doom and destiny, fascinated by blood, sordid sex, and social degradation, they have a weight and portentousness that go far beyond their often puerile, melodramatic plots. Many of them are "Wagnerian" in the worst sense—as wild and whirling as Hamlet's words after seeing the Ghost, as overblown as much of Expressionism, as comic now in their humourless overacting as once they must have seemed impressive. Were they proto-Hitlerian too?

Obviously, Kracauer exaggerated. Many of the directors concerned—including Fritz Lang, Ernst Lubitsch, and Wilhelm Dieterle—left Germany when Hitler came to power. Many of the films had counterparts in other countries: the early cinema was no less sensationalist than "underground" movies now. So it's a little simplistic to see direct links between popular or even unpopular films and Germany's collective political disaster. Nature need not always copy bad art. Nor, indeed, was all the art in question bad. Despite their excesses, despite their extraordinary atmosphere of slow, pop-eyed alarm and beetle-browed malevolence, some of these pictures can still excite and frighten an audience accustomed to their distant idiom. *Caligari* still makes cowards of us all.

Roger Manvell and Heinrich Fraenkel, fresh from their studies of Nazi Germany, have now taken time off to correct some of Kracauer's emphases, in a fairly dispassionate study of *The German Cinema*[1] that runs from Oskar Messter's 19th-century one-reelers to Alexander Kluge's *Die Artisten in der Zirkuskuppel: Ratlos* (1968). As such, it's a fairly useful piece of screen history: it includes plot summaries, a few outline treatments, interview material, personal reminiscences, and well-researched accounts of studio and production background, notably on the Nazi and post-war periods. It describes in detail Goebbels's canny propaganda policy, and the thoroughgoing efforts of the British and American occupation authorities to refound an uncontaminated German film industry; it also admits that in the early post-war period the production of new films flourished more in the East than in the West. Later, the authors point out the large quantities of kitsch produced by German studios, until the revival that followed in the 1960s, partly due to younger film-makers' trying to excavate the "unassimilated past." That

RICHARD MAYNE *has just returned to Europe from a visiting professorship at the University of Chicago. His most recent book, "The Recovery of Europe", was published last year by Weidenfeld & Nicolson (London) and Harper & Row (New York), and he is at present completing a study of "The Europeans". He writes regularly for* ENCOUNTER *on France, Europe, and the arts.*

[1] *The German Cinema.* By ROGER MANVELL and HEINRICH FRAENKEL. Dent, £3.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

kitsch persists is all too evident: the last time I went to the cinema in Bonn, to see *M.A.S.H.* dubbed into German, I had to thread my way past advertisements for pictures like *Porno Baby*, billed as *"Ein scharfe Sex-film"*. Manvell and Fraenkel touch on this phenomenon too, but without drawing conclusions.

On the earlier, more famous epoch, they unavoidably trudge over much familiar ground, long since covered by Lotte Eisner and H. H. Wollenberg, as well as by Kracauer himself. Here, as in the copious stills—163 all told—there's a strong sense of *déjà vu;* but it's certainly useful to have so much information so conveniently to hand. In this respect, the book forms a good companion-piece to Felix Bucher's illustrated guide, *Germany*[2], in the Zwemmer-Barnes Screen Series. This enumerates more than 400 leading figures from the past and present German cinema, each with a potted biography and filmography. With a few exceptions, the illustrations are refreshingly unfamiliar: the still from *Caligari* isn't, for once, Conrad Veidt on the rooftops, and that from *The Blue Angel* doesn't, as thousands cheer, show Marlene Dietrich in a vaudeville top-hat. I'd call Bucher's reference-book an encyclopaedia, except that it's not quite encyclopaedic. Some of its film-lists are avowedly incomplete, others perhaps unwittingly so; and it explicitly omits the American and other films made by German directors. In the case of Fritz Lang, in particular, this seriously limits its scope: it also, I suppose, explains the absence of a separate entry for Fred Zinnemann, despite his early work in Germany on other people's films. For this reason, Manvell and Fraenkel are sometimes more helpful, if less systematically comprehensive. Taken together, then, the two books are a good starting-point for anyone trying to find his way around what Lotte Eisner called "the demoniac screen".

Bucher makes few claims as a critic, except with the occasional adjective. Manvell and Fraenkel are slightly more ambitious. Sometimes, their language reads oddly: "She then indulges in excesses with every man she can seduce." *Come live with me, and be my love,/ And we will indulge in excesses. . . .* To be fair, though, this does convey the tone of some of the films under survey; and while appreciating Manvell's and Fraenkel's techni-

[2] *Germany*. By FELIX BUCHER. Zwemmer/ Barnes, £1.25.

John M. ALLEGRO

The Chosen People

A Study of Jewish history from the time of the Exile until the Revolt of Bar Kocheba

John Allegro has written a valuable and well-documented book which examines afresh, from classical as well as biblical sources, a key period of Jewish history, a period on which so much in present understanding of religion and history depends.

24 pages of illustrations, maps, genealogical tables £3·00

HODDER & STOUGHTON

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cal comments, I'd have welcomed a more considered attempt to analyse that tone and atmosphere, to see whether Lotte Eisner's adjective and Kracauer's thesis really stand up to critical examination.

WITHIN LIMITS, I think they do. Whatever the parallels in other countries, there's no doubt that the early German films embodied powerful myths and emotions. Even now, they have a force that's lacking elsewhere. Part of it derives, I suggest, from the tension between suppressed, aggressive natural forces and a stuffy, father-dominated "respectability". Manvell and Fraenkel quote the plot of one Messter "comedy" made in 1897:

> AT THE CARD TABLE: Two gentlemen seated in a garden are expecting a friend for a game of cards. He arrives, and they welcome him with pleasure while a pretty maid serves brandy. Then a disagreement occurs about the game; one of the gentlemen, very excited, reaches for the garden-hose and squirts water at his friend, who protects himself by opening his umbrella.

I don't want to build too much on this instance, which has obvious parallels in Méliès and Chaplin; but the atmosphere, of gentlemen, brandy, and umbrellas, is typical; and similar discomfiture, of a more serious kind, was played out by Emil Jannings in quite a number of dramas, including *The Blue Angel.* There, respectability crumbled before lust; and in other pictures, such as Pabst's *Die Freudlose Gasse,* it was compromised by economic need. Without following Kracauer all the way, I think one can see in the repeated return to such themes—*The Last Laugh* is another example—a deep-seated worry about what underlay the waistcoat and striped trousers, as well as the society they represented. The criminals who pursue the child-murderer in *M;* the beggars of *Die Dreigroschenoper;* the underworld of *Metropolis;* the madhouses of *Caligari* and *Dr Mabuse*—all surely stand for something deeper than conventional melodramatic properties: they're powerful because they represent the forces that Nazism let loose. And if their vehicle in these films bordered on kitsch—half-baked mythology, schoolboy romanticism, blood-and-thunder, and *Lumpenbürgerlich* belligerence—that too was characteristic of what was to come.

If, now, we often smile at early German movies, it's finally because they're so humourless; and nothing could be more devoid of humour than the Third Reich.

ELIZABETH GUNN

A DARING COIFFEUR

Reflections on Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*

Mrs Gunn has re-read Tolstoy with a quite extraordinary attentiveness and a refreshing freedom from *parti pris*—producing a number of unorthodox ideas. *£1·50*

SUSAN LOWNDES Editor

DIARIES and LETTERS of MARIE BELLOC LOWNDES 1911-1947

George Meredith, Oscar Wilde, Henry James, the Asquiths, Churchills, Northcliffe, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennet, the Sitwells . . . few of the writers of her time had such a circle of friends as Marie Belloc Lowndes and few, indeed, the shrewdness and lively wit displayed in these fascinating and indispensable diaries and letters. *£3·50*

LEON O'BROIN

FENIAN FEVER: AN ANGLO-AMERICAN DILEMMA

A unique account of the abortive Fenian rising of 1867 and its aftermath, told with an historian's dispassionateness and an Irishman's sense of its tragic failure. *£3·15*

CHATTO & WINDUS

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Talent for Pleasing

On Robert Frost—By RONALD HAYMAN

"I HATE THE idea you should read the whole of anyone," Robert Frost once said in an interview. If you read the whole of him in the space of four or five days you find it harder than ever to make up your mind about his work as a whole.[1] It simply is not a whole, except that he wrote it all. Nor is this just due to the striking difference in quality between the best poetry and the bulk of the verse that makes up the eleven volumes reprinted here together with his two Masques. It is the difference between degrees of responsibility and involvement that makes it so hard to decide whether he was a great poet who could not go on living with his own genius or a minor poet who sometimes wrote great poems.

Most of his best poetry has to do with countrymen working. In "Home Burial" for instance, it is the mother's resentful memory of how adroitly her husband dug the grave for their dead child that makes both of them—and the moment of past physical action—so vivid:

I saw you from that very window there,
Making the gravel leap and leap in air,
Leap up, like that, like that, and land so lightly
And roll back down the mound beside the hole.

Most of this poetry comes in his second volume, *North of Boston*, which was published in 1914. (His first, *A Boy's Will*, had come out the year before, when he was 39.) Poems like "Mending Wall", "The Death of the Hired Man", "A Servant to Servants", "After Apple Picking", "The Code", "The Housekeeper" and "The Fear" all have a splendid four-square solidity about them. Frost's voice and personality are masterfully projected into his characters. Except for "After Apple Picking", in which he virtually becomes a character himself, they are all narrative and dramatic poems, written largely in dialogue, with something of the tension of a short story. His ear is as good as his eye. His unobtrusive rhythms capture the speech patterns of these New Englanders while he picks on just the right details to deliver up the texture of their lives, together with the look and smell and feel of the countryside.

These poems are all unrhymed and loose in their rhythms: "Blueberries" is also mostly in dialogue, but the rhymes and the strong beat of the waltzing anapaests neutralise the individual voices, drain out the flavour. This anticipates what was to happen in his later verse when he succumbed, as he so often did, to drum-beat crudity in his rhythms. He is sometimes compared with Hardy but he is more often reminiscent of Kipling. In many of his poems (like "Sand Dunes") the metre overwhelms the meaning.

They are the sea made land
To come at the fisher town
And bury in solid sand
The men she could not drown.

Most of his verse is rhymed and in most of it the rhythm is no less tight than here. Which is why he is at his best in "Design", for instance, where the statement cuts devastatingly against the genial lyrical surface:

I found a dimpled spider, fat and white,
On a white heal-all, holding up a moth
Like a white piece of rigid satin cloth—
Assorted characters of death and blight
Mixed ready to begin the morning right
Like the ingredients of a witches' broth . . . .

His powers of irony were considerable and capable of working very subtly, but though he liked to think that "*It takes all sorts of in- and outdoor schooling/To get adapted to my kind of fooling*", in fact most of his fooling was fairly facile. He relapses with a disconcerting frequency into whimsical doggerel like

He could imagine nothing barrener.
The trouble was with him the mariner.

Or

I quote him with respect verbatim.
Some quaint dissatisfaction ate him.

Such a quantity of the verse is lightweight that only a small proportion deserves the treatment accorded to all of it by this book, with numbered lines and more than fifty pages of textual variants.

After the first book (*A Boy's Will*), *North of Boston* represents an extraordinary stride forward, huge gains in range, weight and authority. But after this Frost barely developed at all. Many of the best of his later poems like "The Witch of Coös", "Two Tramps in Mud Time" and "From Plane to Plane" are based

[1] *The Poetry of Robert Frost.* Edited by EDWARD CONNERY LATHEM. Cape, £4.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on a partial return to his earlier manner, while the other triumphs like "Directive" and "The Subverted Flower" are mostly isolated triumphs. There are some poems (like "Birches") which contain fine descriptive writing and others (like "The Most of It") which touch memorably on the themes of human solitude in an indifferent cosmos or of the relationship between the varieties of destructiveness inside and outside the individual personality. But he was never able to do anything like the same justice to these as he did to physical labour in the open air.

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT the early promise could never in any case have been fulfilled. But it is also possible that his success in playing the role of the Great Poet prevented him from developing as a great poet as he became less of a farmer and more of a performer, cutting himself off from the life which had given a hard core of factuality to the fiction in the early narratives. Talking to his audience directly he lost his own voice in his public voice. He had always thought of the making of a poem as a performance, but latterly he was distracted by the performance he knew he was going to give on the platform, allowing his talent for pleasing his public to draw him away from the talent that really mattered.

But there is also something perverse about his refusal to commit himself more deeply. A poem called "At Woodward's Gardens" in the 1936 volume *A Further Range* describes how two monkeys in a cage get the better of a boy who has been burning them with a magnifying glass. Incapable of understanding how the glass focuses the sun's rays, they nevertheless succeed in gaining possession of it. "It's knowing what to do with things that counts" concludes the poem, and in some editions it is sub-titled *Resourcefulness Is More than Understanding*. Frost's poetry is a monument to this doubtful precept.

SELECTED BOOKS

Love and Landscape-Gardening

GOETHE'S novel[1] is so schematic in its plotting and so stilted in its dialogue that the common reader is unlikely to penetrate very far into it. This is a pity, for in its final stages the work reveals itself as serious, not unsubtle, and even moving—Goethean in the true sense, quite unGoethean if Goethe is conceived of as monolithic, Olympian, and essentially boring.

Charlotte and Eduard, a wealthy and cultured couple, introduce the Captain into their household. Eduard is busy with the Captain on the management of his estate and suggests that Ottilie, Charlotte's young niece, should be brought into the family as the fourth "element", to keep Charlotte company. What happens is that the four elements rearrange themselves, and by the process of elective affinity Eduard and Ottilie fall in love and, though more temperately, so do Charlotte and the Captain. All four are intensely *conscious*—awareness, Charlotte points out, "is no sufficient weapon for him who wields it; it is often, indeed, a dangerous one"—and an enormous amount of discussion of the situation ensues. Life is to be planned, in the way they plan their landscape-gardening or their charitable works. Symbolic occurrences of the most arrant kind abound, and are conscientiously interpreted by the characters according to their dispositions. Eduard suffers from headaches on the right side, Ottilie from headaches on the left side. Ottilie's handwriting turns into Eduard's. The death of the parson in the act of baptising the baby of Charlotte and Eduard is indeed so gross in its symbolism that happily the mind is stunned into insensibility.

This baby is the product of the novel's one sexual act, which takes place almost in a dream between Eduard and Charlotte. Since each partner was thinking of someone else the child turns out to have Ottilie's eyes and the Captain's features. Ottilie, who loves it, accidentally drowns the baby. Again, a highly symbolic occurrence. But while Charlotte interprets it as a sign that she should accede to Eduard's request for a divorce, Ottilie reads it as a clear directive that she must renounce Eduard. Love itself cannot be abolished, and the latter and warmest part of the book displays love without hope of physical satisfaction not merely as "purer" but as fiercer than the commoner species. Ottilie discreetly starves herself to death—her then transformation into a kind of saint with healing powers will repel some modern readers, despite the author's cautious handling, but is an interesting manifestation of Goethe's mystical velleities—and Eduard soon follows her. Charlotte lays him beside Ottilie and closes the vault for ever.

[1] *Elective Affinities*. By JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE. Translated with an introduction by R. J. HOLLINGDALE. Penguin Books, 50p.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Though their propensity for set speeches and the fearful deliberation of their every act render the characters unrealistic, they are even so representations of decency and civility. In the end *Elective Affinities* is neither a defence of matrimony nor a defence of divorce, neither permissive nor puritanical, but a distinctly original description of what happens in the sphere where passions coexist with responsibilities when an irresistible force meets an immovable object. This new translation reads as well as it could do, I should think, no more easily than it is meant to. Apart from some legitimately self-defensive remarks on the artificiality of the *Novelle* form, the introduction is surprisingly taciturn. Mr Hollingdale appears to believe that the whole unhappy *contretemps* can be put down to the idleness of the German landed nobility in the early nineteenth century.

D. J. Enright

A Hard Life

THIS FIRST biography[1] is too long, but contains a lot of information not available elsewhere. West deserves a Life as spare and elegant as his stories. Mr Martin lists over two and a half pages of names he has corresponded with, apart from those he has spoken with, with or without tapes. Among other sources acknowledged are *Time-Life* files. There is too much background, a great deal of it repetitive. Much of the foreground is repetitive too, and Mr Martin bashes each point he makes again and again. It is unfortunate for him that S. J. Perelman appears so frequently: *his* presence causes one to look at some of the sentences squintwise. "Paris proved to hold a particular fascination for West." "Sex, in any event, left its collective and individual traces everywhere." ". . . the perfection of form, the gem-like flame of verbal exactitude, in essence, the symbolist hope. . . . "

However, there is ample material from which to extract the story. West's whole family-network emigrated from German-Jewish Lithuania to avoid the conscription of their sons into the Tsarist Army. He grew up as an all-American boy, who preferred not to do well at school. Mr Martin weirdly says, "Like most good satirists, including Pope and Swift, he was not a good student." He got into two colleges with forged examination grades, on the second occasion impersonating a namesake. He wore Brooke Brothers clothes. His friends insist that he told tall stories, and this causes difficulties for his biographer: it is difficult to make out exactly what went on during his three months in Paris. Some of these fantasies finished up in his novels. When his family's comparative wealth disappeared in the Depression, he worked for some years as a hotel manager. As such he was concerned about his guests' sufferings: he gave free lodging to broke writers: he regarded his office as a glass cell for contemplation. He had atrocious luck with the publication of his books: printing delays, poor dustcovers and bankruptcy of publishers led to mis-timing of reviews, inadequate distribution and disappointing sales. He was out of print for years. He was constrained to work in Hollywood, where he became involved with left-wing activities. He was difficult about sex, like many people, and at various times suffered from urethritis and prostatitis. He enjoyed the friendship of, among others, W. C. Williams, Edmund Wilson, James T. Farrell, S. J. Perelman and Scott Fitzgerald. (It is perhaps worth noting that he was by no means *scuola di Hemingway*.) He married, happily, the heroine of "My Sister Eileen": he and his wife were killed a year later in a car-smash.

Mr Martin offers lengthy exegeses of West's writings. He is a relentless pursuer of symbols and significances, and in this field perhaps the reader can choose better for himself. Robert E. Sherwood's *The Petrified Forest* and *King Lear* are both used to help elucidate *The Day of the Locust*. At times one gets the impression that everybody is influencing everybody. Sometimes Mr Martin's scholarship can be faulted, especially about Surrealism, which is one of his key themes. He assumes that Surrealism is the same as Dadaism, and not its negation, and that both can be equated with The Absurd. This seems to have been a common misunderstanding in the U.S.A., and was very likely shared by West, but it should have been sorted out by now. The "Bureau Centrale de Recherches Surréalistes" is described as "mock-scientific": among others taking part in its activities was Artaud, who had little sense of humour. Mr Martin lists Anatole France as an influence upon West, without mentioning the surrealists' savage attack upon France to celebrate his death in 1924, although he emphasises the Manifesto of the same year.

One would have liked Mr Martin to comment on the similarity of style of the moustaches worn by West, Perelman, Groucho Marx and James Thurber.

Martin Bell

Ithaka Achieved

IN HIS NEW "commonplace book"[2]—a 440-page anthology of quotations and comments—Auden promises us a literary autobiography. What he in fact gives us is a literary portrait of the mature Auden, full of references to his past tastes, but carefully weighted towards his present interests which necessitate, for him, a conscious and constantly reiterated rejection of old allegiances. The book reveals not the complexities of a life's literary journey, but rather the clarities of a wise Ithaka achieved, an Ithaka from which the

[1] *Nathanael West, The Art of his Life*. By JAY MARTIN. Secker & Warburg, £4.50.

[2] *A Certain World*. By W. H. AUDEN. Faber, £3.00.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

traveller denies or forgets much of his journey. The title, *A Certain World,* reflects not only the fact that it is Auden's own peculiar literary world we are witnessing, but also that his is a fixed world of conclusions, interpretations, certainties, a place of comprehended structures and ordered facts—and most of all, a fallen world. Ethics and theology, variously costumed, recur throughout the book.

One unfortunate quality in the tone the elder Auden adopts to chasten his youth (as in the entry entitled "Commitment") is its negativeness. Instead of making the positive point that the nature of poetic statement is non-partisan, that in the intellectual balance or synthesis of opposites it achieves it transcends sectarian commitment, he says instead that poetry is impotent as a social motive force. What could be seen as the defining quality of poetic statement he sees as a mere limitation. This negativeness recurs in various forms throughout the book. For example, Auden has entries for Hell but none for Heaven (only the "Earthly Paradise"); he dedicates many pages to War but none to Peace, several to Sin but none to Virtue. For him, the devil still plays many of the best tunes. The religion smacks of the Old Testament, though Auden has selected rhetorically winning passages from C. S. Lewis and charming pages from Charles Williams and from *The Desert Fathers,* so that his choice is provocative. Perhaps this negativeness in Auden is a sin he will come to recognise—a sin which, should he fail to come to terms with it, will end in bitterness, or as he says of sin generally, "tend to be addictive, and the terminal point of all addiction is what is called damnation." This would be hardly the new teleology Auden advocates!

Opposite the stern moral world, the concrete world of the younger poet—mines, rugged landscapes, volcanoes—survives only as description to which no ideology attaches. The ethics of the older poet do not relate to his landscape which seems to have re-acquired a purity, an inhumanity, an elementality peculiar to the almost autistic childhood landscape Auden describes ("Writing", 423ff). The poet is not reformer or Hardyesque ironist in this book, though his image of the past shares with Hardy that sense of the unrealised, not the idealised potential.

In *A Certain World,* a generous poet has, it seems, given us two worlds: the religious, structured world of a reformed pragmatist; and the wonderful world of fact to which the other world bears little relation. The book mirrors that strange duality some readers sense throughout Auden's work—the poet's mind torn between the world and a world-guilt generative of an ethical and metaphysical alternative world. The two worlds never fuse. Goethe, Simone Weil, Ruskin, Valéry, Chesterton, and others articulate the complex double-world of the mature Auden. This rich anthology is amusing and provoking—for what it omits as much as for what it contains.

Michael Schmidt

Science in court

Lexicology, 'the science of the derivation and signification of words', is nowhere better demonstrated than in **Webster's Third New International Dictionary** and nowhere more vital than in the great courts of law. The *International* is the product of thirty years of research into English word usage and every supreme court in the United States—federal and state—uses it as a basic source of reference. You should, too.
1966 Copyright Printing, with addenda. 450,000 entries. 3,000 explanatory drawings, 20 colour plates. In 1-vol or 2-vol style. £30 *net*

'The kind of basic dictionary that every literate home should have'—Marghanita Laski's persuasive argument in favour of **Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary,** a direct abridgement of the *International.*
1969 Copyright Printing. 130,000 entries. 1,800 explanatory drawings. £3·50 net, or thumb-indexed style, £4·20 net.

Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms is far richer than any thesaurus and includes quotations from the works of 3,300 classical and modern authors to illustrate fine shades of difference in meaning. *942 pages. £5·75 net*

Webster's Geographical Dictionary has 40,000 place names and natural features and all the information about them most likely to be needed.
1969 Edition. 1,300 pages. 151 maps. £6 net

Webster's Biographical Dictionary summarises the lives and achievements of 40,000 people from all countries and all walks of life. *1970 Edition. 1,700 pages. £6 net*

Prospectuses from **G BELL & SONS**
6 Portugal Street London WC2A 2HL

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Observation Ward

IN MID-CAREER Mrs Lessing has discovered dream, nightmare, fantasy and is using them to explore the individual conscience at depths her realist fiction hardly touched. In her latest novel,[1] no longer bound as she was in *The Four-Gated City* by the exhaustive need to dovetail the life and times of Martha Quest, she gives full play to her protagonist's freewheeling mind.

Her new hero is Professor Charles Watkins (Classics). We meet him confined to an Observation Ward, suffering from amnesia—or, as he comes to see it, the rejection of his futile life. While he is under heavy sedation, the first half of the narrative is an interior monologue of dream exploration interspersed with the crass interrogations of Drs. X. and Y. They aim at restoring his awareness of "reality" and label his dreams religious paranoia; to "the Patient" his dreams form a vision of "knowing. Harmony. God's law" from which, as his identity is forced back upon him, he slides as from pure Platonic pre-existence. His doctors probe after his public identity, recruiting the views of wife, mistress, colleagues, friends, rebuilding him in the image of the man *they* have made. Watkins himself battles to cling to the truth of the fable, the interior journey to the forsaken perfect city, the blessed white bird, the warring Earth exposed beneath the Moon's full light, the "descent" into corruption and possible forgetfulness. He cannot hold on: the fable has its reflex in the uncovered fantasies of his bitter, repressed life. Hard driven to find "himself", he takes the risk of letting them shock him back into life, not truth. Life wins, and with it conformity and a "sane" professional rejection of those few who had caught his inner spark—Rosemary Baines, the retired headmistress whom his speaking in a prosaic village hall had once moved, and Violet Stoke, the loveless, father-seeking girl whom he befriends in hospital.

The fabular journey of the first half of the novel is a vividly imagined divided universe in which anarchy and harmony blend, dissolve and confront each other in dynamic tension. Counterpointed against this are the studied rationalisations of the Doctors and the self-entangled prejudices of the "normal." As has been pointed out elsewhere, Mrs Lessing has obviously taken R. D. Laing to heart, but this novel is no casebook. She deeply believes in the higher sanity of the extra sensitive and shows how tragically this is being violated by the speculative science of psychiatry if its end is (to vary Orwell on the totalitarian state) to make us less *un*conscious. If, compared to her previous works, this novel is somewhat under-dramatised, this serves the purpose of deepening her protagonist's isolation. The letters by which the other *dramatis personae* reveal themselves in the process of offering to analyse Watkins are pointedly ironic evidences of the indefinable nature of "personality." It is a welcome surprise to receive from Mrs Lessing a novel which is strong and forceful, not only in theme, but also like her short stories, in structure.

Michael Thorpe

[1] *Briefing for a Descent into Hell.* By DORIS LESSING. Jonathan Cape. £1.60.

[2] *Tolstoy and Chekhov.* By LOGAN SPEIRS. Cambridge University Press, £2.40.

Truth & Literature

MATTHEW ARNOLD gave Tolstoy criticism in England an excellent start with his essay on *Anna Karenina,* but it was then put on the wrong track by James' utterly mistaken remarks about "loose baggy monsters", so that even in the 1950s Richard Hare could refer to Levin as an "amiable bore" in what purported to be a serious account of *Anna Karenina.* Since then, however, Tolstoy criticism has taken an upward turn again with Leavis' essay, with John Bailey's interesting (if rather jerky and inconsequential) book and with R. F. Christian's useful accounts of much Russian work on Tolstoy. Now we have a critical study of Tolstoy and Chekhov by Logan Speirs[2] which has some good things in it, but which is somehow disappointing in its total effect.

The good things are scattered observations such as the ones on Tolstoy's replacement of story-telling with a concern for first-handedness, on his view of lying as an ubiquitous phenomenon, and on his use of short compressed chapters, a use which, one is tempted to add, makes the wordy James' accusation of shapelessness so malapropos. Speirs succeeds in the very difficult task of giving one a sense of the form and unity of *War and Peace,* though he, like Christian, never really gets to grips with the problem of the truth of Tolstoy's views about history. It simply won't do to say "It does not matter whether Tolstoy himself is getting his facts right here" (in the account of Borodino). This is no more acceptable than Christian's confused talk of "artistic truth" as opposed to "historical truth" and of "inner consistency" in dealing with a work which certainly makes claims about a world beyond itself. However no one has yet given a satisfactory account of the problem of truth in literature. Speirs is good on the importance of the portrait of the uncensorious Oblonsky in *Anna Karenina* as putting a brake on the novel's incipient "puritanism" and on the merits of *Hadji Murad.* It is misleading, however, to say that *Family Happiness* is founded on personal experience, when, as Speirs himself recognises, it is a "what might have happened" story and, moreover, told rather unconvincingly from the girl's point of view. Though *Resurrection* is certainly an inferior work, it seems to me that Speirs is a little too anxious to denigrate the later Tolstoy and underestimates the power of the reminiscences of the love scenes with Katusha and the force of some of Katusha-Maslova's own criticism of Nekhludoff's "spirituality."

The real disappointment I feel with the book however, finds its origin in a certain lack of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

critical intensity which leads Speirs at his worst into too much plot summary and, at times, banality of expression. It is getting a little late in the day to remark that Tolstoy's account of Vronsky and his mare is too close in method to D. H. Lawrence "to be entirely accidental." Such further parallels with Lawrence as Speirs proposes are either not altogether convincing or make Lawrence sound more inferior than Speirs seems willing to acknowledge. I applaud, however, his repudiation of Lawrence's attack on Vronsky. As he points out, Lawrence both misquotes Vronsky's remarks on his uselessness and transfers them from after Anna's death to the much earlier scene of her disgrace at the opera. A certain banality of reflection and a too easy opposition of Chekhov's position to Tolstoy's somehow prevents the Chekhov section from characterising and communicating the kind of interest Speirs obviously feels that Chekhov has.

E. B. Greenwood

Riddles

THE OLD ENGLISH verse riddles present more than the usual problems of translation[1]—on the one hand the original text is often obscure, if not downright corrupt; on the other, the solutions are not given in the Exeter book and scholars have exercised considerable ingenuity in finding possible answers, which now have an aura of authority about them. Take this one:

A creature came shuffling where there sat
many wise men in the meeting-place.
He had two ears and only one eye,
he had two feet and twelve hundred heads,
a back, two hands, and a belly,
two shoulders and sides, a neck,
and two arms. Now tell me his name.

The usual solution is inspired, if desperate—a one-eyed seller of onions.

To cut through such tangles, retain a hint of the Old English alliterative line, and show the variety and appeal of subject matter and mood is quite a feat. The riddles range from heroic to homely; from poems where the solution concerns the poet less than the delights of description, to simple joke or trick verses; from sensitive accounts of suffering and triumph to cheeky sexuality. Kevin Crossley-Holland has been very successful with a wide selection of these poems. He uses alliteration imaginatively, varies pace—it would be impossible to follow the Old English slavishly in this, so much has the character of the language changed—and brings out the vitality and variety. His own enjoyment is clear, and echoes the enjoyment of Anglo-Saxon writer and compiler alike. It is, after all, rather remarkable that a body of

[1] *Storm and Other Old English Riddles.* Translated by KEVIN CROSSLEY-HOLLAND. Illustrated by MILES THISTLETHWAITE. Macmillan, £1.05.

World of Man

The Politics of the Family and other Essays

R. D. LAING

In this brief and lucid book R. D. Laing applies a theory of mapping to stripping away preconceptions and projections that obscure our view of our families and what goes on within them. £1·50 net

Making Peace

ADAM CURLE

Professor Curle proposes an alternative conception of peacemaking that permits an optimistic view of what can be achieved by both professional and amateur peacemakers. £3·00 net

ASA Monographs, 10

Social Anthropology and Language

Edited by EDWIN ARDENER

These papers by social anthropologists and linguists reflect the developing concern with the place of language in anthropological studies, and offer collaborative insights to the growing body of scholars with sociolinguistic interests. £4·00 net

Recent Social Science Paperbacks

Reason and Violence

Second Edition

R. D. LAING and D. G. COOPER

Foreword by Jean-Paul Sartre

£1·00; hardback £1·90 net

Madness and Civilization

A HISTORY OF INSANITY IN THE AGE OF REASON

MICHEL FOUCAULT

£1·00; hardback £1·75 net

Tavistock Publications

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

poetry that is not specifically Christian should have been included in a predominantly religious collection; Anglo-Saxon church censorship, it seems, was not entirely fun-killing, and the riddles certainly dispel the popular notion of stern Germanic peoples drinking, raping, burning and worshipping in a relentlessly serious-minded fashion.

The translation of the "Storm" riddle is particularly satisfying, capturing the drama and violent action. One passage runs:

Then the ship is filled
With the yells of sailors; the cliffs quietly
Abide the ocean's froth and fury
Lashing waves, racing rollers
That smash against stone.

I like the recurrent *I*, subtly reminding one of the original alliterative line. A comparison with Paull F. Baum's version (*Anglo-Saxon Riddles of the Exeter Book*, Duke University Press) of the last lines—"high the violence Crowds on the headlands"—shows the poet scoring over the conscientious translator in conveying the tone of the original.

There are one or two less happy moments: for instance, in "Swallows or Midges" the Anglo-Saxon writer managed, by skilful phrasing, an uncharacteristic sequence of open syllables, to give an airy lightness to the subect (Old English is usually a slow-moving deliberate language), and it seems to me that the translation misses this. One regrets, too, not having an interpretation of the longer "Horn" riddle with its haunting and ambiguous mixture of exultation and bitterness. But on the whole this selection gives us the poetry, the teasing charm and above all the pleasure of the riddles—which is no small achievement.

Elizabeth Maslen

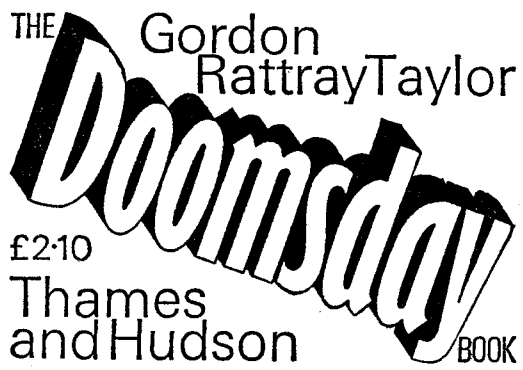
Born Again

THE AFRICAN MAGAZINE *Transition*[1] has recommenced after a gap of 2½ years initiated by the arrest of its editor, Rajat Neogy, in Kampala in October 1968 on a charge of sedition. The explicit occasion of the Government's action, which developed into a stock attack on intellectuals as subversive, élitist, foreign-controlled saboteurs, was an article by a Ugandan M.P. implying that the Government was quite happy in retaining "outmoded Colonial laws" and "especially those designed to suppress freedom of association and expression." Neogy was acquitted by the court and (after further threats) released in March 1969; the offending M.P. was released in August 1970.

President Obote has since fallen, but the resuscitated *Transition* is published from Ghana. The present number includes an attractive mixture of autobiography and colonial history from Ali A. Mazrui, Professor of Political Science at Makerere University, Uganda; an exhortation by Lewis Nkosi to South African blacks to emulate American blacks and renounce their foreign well-wishers; a largely approving analysis of the new Constitution of Ghana by B. D. G. Folson, Executive Director of Ghana's Centre for Civic Education; an account by Paul Theroux of the effect on drinking and whoring customs of the 1966 curfew in Uganda; and an anecdotal Nigerian Civil War Notebook by John de St. Jorre, which ends: " 'It's almost pathetic when we talk with the *Biafrans* now,' a Hausa told me. 'Their reality has been shattered; yesterday it was their lives, now it's nothing—and we know they feel it was basically unreal; so we help them a little by calling them *Biafrans* still.' "

It is to be hoped that in future Rajat Neogy will be left to exercise his considerable editorial gifts in peace.

[1] *Transition*. Published every other month, 30p. U.K., $1.10 U.S.A. P.O. Box 9063, Accra, Ghana.



PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POINTS OF THE COMPASS

An American Profile

The Black Student Militant

By Martin Kilson

A FEW INSTITUTIONS for the higher education of Negro Americans were established before the Civil War, but it was after this war (1861-1865) that white educators and missionaries from the North went South to found, by the end of the 19th century, some 200 institutions primarily for the higher education of Negroes. Today there are about 123 such institutions, located overwhelmingly in the South. (Some exceptions are Lincoln University, Pennsylvania; Cheney State College, Pennsylvania; and Wilberforce University, Ohio). Over the past century they have been responsible for training most of the black American élites.

It was not until the end of World War II that sizeable numbers of Negroes began to attend white colleges, and it was in the post-war era that the proportion of black Americans in the college population exceeded 1%. Today perhaps 6% of the nearly 2 million American college students are Negro; and about 70% of blacks in college are attending white institutions. In 1960 Negroes were between 1-2% of the 400,000 college graduates. A similar pattern obtained for graduate and professional schools: of 9,300 law graduates in 1960, 100-150 were Negro; 150 of 7,000 medical graduates were Negro; 100 of 3,500 pharmacy graduates were Negro; and 400-500 of 37,800 engineering graduates (Bachelor degree) were Negro. Special programmes instituted in the past decade to expand the output of Negro professionals will no doubt bear fruit in the 1970s.

UNTIL QUITE RECENTLY, the Negro colleges in the South were rather pedestrian places—partly because nearly half of them were controlled by religious denominations (56 were in 1965). Their administrators were conservative, they lacked adequate financial resources, and, not the least important, they existed in the authoritarian and racist social system of the American South. Thus, until recently the typical Negro college educated its students to be, first and foremost, teachers, and also clergymen, lawyers, doctors, and businessmen. Moreover, seeking the adaptation of the educated Negro to the dominant institutions in American life, the Negro college impressed upon its students a sense of conformity to middle-class culture. Related to this was the need (for survival's sake if no other) to teach students to defer to the mores of the South, where caste divided black from white communities and the latter, virtually free from constraints from the rest of the nation, brutalised, demeaned, and exploited the former through racist institutions and behaviour patterns.

It is, then, in this context that the endeavour to comprehend militancy and the crisis in Negro colleges should be placed. In this context both the early appearance of students in Negro colleges in initiating political militancy on American campuses and the special place of college administration conservatism or paternalism in current unrest on Negro campuses are readily understood. The early role of Negro college students in campus militancy is a direct outgrowth of the Civil Rights movement's mounting attack on the South's authoritarian and racist institutions in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The place of

THERE *has been so much superficial and sloganised press coverage in Britain and elsewhere in Europe—and the situation in the U.S. is hardly better—on "Black" problems that this illuminating and comprehensive study should be a welcome contribution. It is, we think, the most thoughtful and original paper on the subject that has yet been written—and perhaps for that very reason the author (as a special consultant) ran into difficulties with the recent Scranton Commission whose official report to the U.S. Government contented itself with easy and simple-minded formulations.*

Martin Kilson is one of the leading young Negro scholars in America, Professor of Government at Harvard University and a Fellow of the Center for International Affairs. He was born in 1931, educated at Harvard (M.A. 1958, Ph.D. 1959), and is the author of "Political Change in a West African State." He contributed a short article to ENCOUNTER *(April 1971) on "The 'Put-On' of Black Panther Rhetoric."*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the college administration's conservatism in today's unrest on Negro campuses is due to the failure of Negro administrators to free themselves of the caste-ridden dictation and the Victorian values of the South's white leadership. This failure, moreover, was due in large part to the growing financial dependence of most Negro colleges upon state legislatures in the South—a dependence hardly conducive to innovation in the style and form of college administration, whether on black or white campuses in the South. Indeed, one major condition of future change in the conservatism of Negro college administration will be a replacement of the position of southern state legislatures in the finance of Negro colleges, most likely by the Federal government.

A BRIEF PROFILE of students at Negro colleges is in order. The data here are drawn from a national representative survey of college freshmen by the American Council on Education in 1968.[1]

1 The age of students at Negro colleges. They tend to be older, as freshmen, than their white peers. In 1968 some 21.3% of freshmen in Negro colleges were 19 years old, compared to 13.1% of white freshmen. And 5.2% of freshmen in Negro colleges are 20 years old, compared to 1.6% for white freshmen.

2 The sexual breakdown of first-year students. This shows, for Negro colleges, the persistence of the historical pattern of female predominance: women comprised 58% of students entering Negro colleges in 1968, compared with 47% of white freshmen who were female.

3 Background. Freshmen in Negro colleges are distinctly of non-urban background: only 19.5% of males are from large cities, but 38% are from farm or small-town background, and the remainder largely from medium-sized town or city. A similar situation obtains for Negro female freshmen at Negro colleges. The regional breakdown, moreover, found 58.5% of male freshmen (64.3% female) in Negro colleges coming from the South, one of the least urbanised regions of the country.

4 The occupations of fathers. Those of freshmen at Negro colleges are overwhelmingly unskilled and semi-skilled: 50.6% of males (43.2% of females) entering Negro colleges have fathers in these occupational categories. White freshmen, on the other hand, have fathers of middle-class and upper middle-class occupations. Indeed, the fathers of Negro freshmen (in black or white colleges) are three times as likely to be semi-skilled or unskilled as the fathers of white freshmen.

5 The educational attainment of parents. For freshmen at Negro colleges this is hardly better than the occupational status. Thus about 60% of all freshmen (male and female) at Negro colleges have fathers who did not complete high school (27% had fathers of grammar school education or less) and 50% had mothers without high school education, compared to 25% white freshmen with fathers without high school education and 20% white freshmen with mothers without high school background.

6 Finally, the income position of parents. For freshmen at Negro colleges it is, like education, significantly poorer than that of white freshmen's parents. Thus 62.3% of male and female freshmen in Negro colleges have parents with less than $6,000 income, only 13% of white male and female freshmen have parents in this income bracket.

In the light of the Southern setting and the conservative style of Negro colleges, a major social movement was necessary before political militancy could characterise student behaviour at these colleges. The Civil Rights movement, spurred into a national force by changes induced by World War II, became the radicalising force at Negro colleges. It transformed Negro students from a quiescent group, soberly acquiring middle-class virtues taught at Negro colleges, to activists, militantly opposed to white racism and in support of Negro advancement as a community.

This transformation occurred in two distinct stages. First, in the late 1950s through the early 1960s, Dr. Martin Luther King spearheaded a militant but non-violent extension of the Negro Civil Rights movement. Second, in the middle and late 1960s there emerged a racially militant and violent elaboration of the Negro protest movement which was organised by the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee whose leaders (viz. Stokely Carmichael) were disenchanted with the politically militant but non-violent style of protest associated with Dr. King.

THE FIRST STAGE OF MILITANCY at Negro colleges found students stimulated by Dr. King's methods of accelerating the attack upon white racism. They participated in direct-action tactics like "sit-ins", "stand-ins", "wade-ins", etc., which were used against segregationist public institutions and private businesses that serve the public. The first student-organised action of this kind was the student lunch-counter sit-in at a drugstore in Greensboro, North Carolina in January 1960. It was organised by Negro students at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College. This initial instance of

[1] Survey based on national representative sample of 83,000 freshmen in 1968, of whom 75,820 were white students in 200 four-year white colleges, 1,996 Negro students in the same 200 white colleges and 5,384 Negro students in four-year Negro colleges.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

student militancy at a Negro college ignited similar actions, within a week, throughout Negro colleges in North Carolina (*e.g.* Winston-Salem Teachers College, North Carolina College, Fayetteville Teachers College, Elizabeth City Teachers College, Shaw University, Johnson C. Smith University, St. Augustine's College, etc.). This movement spread within a month, throughout the South, from Hampton Institute and Virginia State University in the upper South to Tuskegee Institute and Alabama State College in the deep South.

The Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) also got its start in the wake of the militant action of students at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in January 1960. But the early stage of political militancy by students at Negro colleges did not disregard the established Civil Rights movement. Rather it took its cue, ideologically and methodologically, from the established Civil Rights leadership—especially from Martin Luther King's Montgomery Improvement Association and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Thus both interracial goals and non-violence —in word and act—governed the early stages of student militancy at Negro colleges.

This early phase of Negro student militancy at Negro colleges continued until 1965-66, at which time a second phase got underway. But while the first stage prevailed from 1960-1966, it had what amounts to a revolutionary impact upon the political attitudes of Negro youth in the South. Thousands were wrenched out of a state of indifference toward white racist practices and persuaded into a programme of active attack upon such practices. Thus a random sample survey of students in Negro colleges in 11 Southern states shows that in the years 1960-1965 some 24% of Negro students in the South participated in direct action against segregationist practices. In regard to the change of attitude effected by Civil Rights militancy at Negro colleges, 85% of the students sampled in 1965 approved of "sit-ins" and 84% approved of "Freedom Rides".

Violence in the South

THE SECOND STAGE of militancy at Negro colleges commenced around 1963-1964 when it was becoming clear that the student constituency in the Civil Rights movement in the South was acquiring an organisational differentiation from other constituencies in the movement (*e.g.* SCLC, NAACP, Negro professional associations, etc.). This was achieved through two militant Civil Rights organisations: the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) then led by James Farmer, and the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), then under the leadership of John Lewis.

The SNCC, most of whose leaders were from working-class backgrounds and the first generation in their families to attend college, had a central role in the differentiation of Negro students in the South from the established Civil Rights movement. It was innovative in the kinds of issues and concerns the Civil Rights movement began to entertain in the years 1963-1966. More specifically, the SNCC brought issues of immediate concern to rural, lower-class Negroes, rather than the urban middle-class, to the forefront of the Civil Rights movement. Above all, the SNCC improvised a new style and manner of Negro protest. The SNCC leaders wore the clothes of rural rather than urban Negroes and spent increasingly more time in rural areas. They also fashioned a political appeal—a language, rhetoric, and mode of expression — meant expressly for rural and lower-class Negroes, that is, for the masses.

THIS NEW STYLE AND MODE of Negro protest which the SNCC spearheaded in the South in the years 1963-1966 evolved from 1966 onward under the banner of "Black Power" and the charismatic leadership of Stokely Carmichael. Black Power meant many things to many people, but to students at Negro colleges its message was that Negroes had waited long enough to assert their community's rights over and against whites, and that interracialism and non-violence were fetters to the effective assertion of Negro rights, especially within the physical confines of Negro institutions and organisations. The impact of this upon the militancy of students at Negro colleges was enormous—greater than on the constituency for which the new SNCC style of protest was fashioned, namely, the rural masses. For one thing, non-violence, though it remained formally in the name and initals of SNCC, ceased as a doctrine to govern the political militancy of students at Negro colleges. So, too, did the goal of an interracial society, at least at the level of verbal articulation, though, in practice, most students in Negro colleges have, rather surprisingly, proved quite ambivalent toward the long-standing interracialist goal of the Negro Civil Rights

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

movement. So far they have not excluded it from the style of their political militancy—as Negro students on white campuses have done.

Nonetheless, the rejection of non-violence as a political method (rather than ambivalence toward interracialism) has shaped the second, current phase of student militancy in Negro colleges. The campus incident which inaugurated this violent stage of militancy at Negro colleges occurred at South Carolina State College, Orangeburg, in February 1968. The incident concerned off-campus segregated bowling facilities. The bowling alley protest by Negro students at South Carolina State College was responded to by the city authorities with the dispatch of the National Guard and police. But non-violence was no longer the Negro students' guidepost. They met the force of the state of South Carolina with force: some students gun-sniped at the police and Guard, some set fires, and others ran riot in whatever ways they could. The outcome was two students dead and some 40 wounded.

The Orangeburg incident of 1968 was, then, a turning point in the militancy at Negro colleges. Apart from the issue sparking the incident being off-campus, unlike issues sparking subsequent violent incidents which were mainly on-campus, the Orangeburg affair was the pace-setter. Like the subsequent acts of militancy by Negro students, non-violence was discarded, in word and act. Students were now determined to return the force of white racist state governments with force of their own. Indeed, this applied as well to the administrations of Negro colleges, for though mainly in black hands, these administrations were seen by students who were influenced by the doctrine of Black Power as "handmaidens of white power", or at least of white paternalistic and conservative values *vis-à-vis* blacks.

It is of little surprise, then, that violence, perpetrated by police and Negro students, has characterised the majority of militant incidents on Negro college campuses ever since the Orangeburg incident in 1968. Thus, of some 34 major militant incidents at Negro colleges for the period February 1968 to May 1969, only several were not reported as violent. Moreover, the violence associated with these militant incidents at Negro colleges since February 1968 has been substantial, as the Orangeburg event already indicates. For example, Negro student protest at Bluefield State College in West Virginia in November 1968 resulted in bomb threats and an explosion at the physics building, causing $80,000 damages. At another militant incident at Voorhees College in Denmark, South Carolina, in April 1969, militant Negro students, armed with knives and guns, took control of the main adminstration building; and at another point in this disturbance armed students seized other administration buildings, causing the National Guard to be called to quell the disturbances. At still another militant incident at Howard University in Washington, D.C., during 7-10 May, 1969, many militant students participated in violent acts (smashing windows, furniture, vending machines); the ROTC building was set on fire and completely gutted; and the university dining facilities were heavily looted.

INASMUCH AS POLICE POWER applied to blacks in the South—and not much less outside—has been distinctly mean and reckless, the violence attending militant incidents on Negro campuses is more likely to result in students' deaths. Yet, surprisingly enough, apart from the two students killed in Orangeburg in February 1968, and two additional deaths at Jackson State College in Mississippi in May 1970, no other deaths have been reported from the many militant incidents at Negro colleges since 1968. Presumably there has been more restraint by white police and National Guard involved in quelling violent disturbances at Negro colleges since February 1968 than one would expect.

Equally surprising is the fact that, though markedly more violent than white student militancy on white campuses, black student militancy at Negro colleges has been decidely *less political* in nature. That is to say, the issues that have sparked violent militancy at Negro colleges since early 1968 have been much less concerned with the Viet Nam war, ROTC, recruitment on campus by the armed forces or firms engaged in military production, and other directly political matters, which usually spark disturbances at white colleges. Instead, the militant incidents at Negro colleges have focused upon paternalistic and conservative practices of Negro administrators. These include conservative parietal rules, compulsory class attendance, compulsory religious observances (some 56 of 123 Negro colleges were controlled by religious denominations in 1965), disproportionate emphasis on popular sports, rules governing students' personal appearance, and allegedly poor food and living facilities. Furthermore,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when the issue sparking a militant confrontation at Negro colleges has been of a more usual political nature, rather than of administrative origin, it has been a matter like "student participation" and more "black nationalist oriented courses".

Surprisingly again, the level and intensity of violent disturbances at Negro colleges (where in the years 1968-1969 average participation in violent acts was around 30% of the student body and often 50% and more) seems to have abated strikingly in 1969-1970. Violence erupted at Paul Quinn College in Texas, at Morgan State College in Maryland, and at Jackson State College in Mississippi; but elsewhere among more than 100 Negro colleges relative peace and quiet reigned. And this was so despite the fact that during the spring of 1970, the Cambodia decision and the students' deaths at Kent State University sparked widespread disturbances in American colleges and universities. Only a handful of Negro colleges participated in the campus strikes of that spring, and none of these was particularly noteworthy for its success.

WHY, THEN, WAS the typical Negro campus quiescent in the past year, in face of a powerful stimulus to be otherwise? In the first place, a caution: it may well be that a new storm is in the offing, and thus the present quiet at Negro colleges may only be the lull before the storm. One reason for this caution is that where issues were explicitly political during the extraordinary violent militancy of Negro colleges in the school years 1967-1969 (and especially 1968-1969), the matter of Black Curriculum and of a Black Nationalist University was invariably present. This was preeminently the case at Howard University during its exceptionally violent events of May 1969; for at Howard it seemed that the very self-concept and identity of the militant students were inextricably linked to the goal of a so-called "Black University", that is, a black nationalist institution, led and staffed by Negroes unquestionably committed to black separatism, the glorification of the Negro heritage, and the like—though, interestingly enough, paid for by whites, rather like in the way Negro colleges have always been funded. In short, the issues of Black Studies and a so-called "Black University"—issues which provide the main link between militancy at Negro colleges and an equally violent militancy by Negro students at white colleges outside the South—are composed of such potentially explosive materials (psychological, emotional, cultural) that they might well break through the apparent calm at Negro colleges.

Yet, calm there has been, and an explanation is called for. Certainly the fact that the issues which sparked the early disturbances at Negro colleges were not tied to long-run radical issues ("demilitarising American society") facilitated a specific response by administrations at these colleges. Clearly a Negro college, or any college, can do little about the long-run demilitarisation of American society; but it can discard outmoded rules governing parietals, or class attendance, religious observances, alter badly prepared or served food, and offer Negro students whose political perspectives have been influenced by the doctrine of Black Power a greater sense of participation in *their* —not "whitey's"—institution.

These and related innovations have been made throughout much of the Negro college system over the past year. Students have been "co-opted"; *i.e.* brought into governing boards of trustees at Howard, Fisk University, Kentucky State College and elsewhere; and given positions on sundry committees and bureaux that administer student life at Negro colleges. Changes in the presidency of many Negro colleges in the past two years have also helped: paternalistic heads have gone, replaced by more democratic-minded men, who are also capable of "closing the generation gap" and responding to the black group consciousness now rampant in Negro colleges.

YET MAJOR PROBLEMS REMAIN, and as I have already suggested, might well stimulate a new round of disturbances in Negro colleges. Surely the substantive and long-run problems of Negro colleges like staffing (Negro colleges typically lose between one-fifth and a half of academic staff each year), academic upgrading, physical expansion, and financial solvency persist. The new changes in political style and leadership of Negro colleges do not, however, help these matters much. At least in regard to finances, they exacerbate things: conservative state legislatures in the South might well be less attentive to financial needs of Negro colleges under the new leadership. And even if these changes in political style and leadership did not matter, the growth needs (and needs related to higher academic standards of Negro colleges) cannot be met from state finances. The Federal government must move into the picture in some unprecedented way.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Difference in the North

THE BLACK STUDENT has been, until recently, the most neglected constituency of white colleges. Until the end of World War II white colleges—not much more conscious of the harm of white racism than the rest of American society—paid little attention to the higher education of Negroes, eagerly leaving this task overwhelmingly to Negro colleges. Thus by the end of World War II roughly 80% of college educated blacks were attending Negro colleges.

Particularly since 1960 the situation has changed significantly. Today perhaps 70% of blacks in college are enrolled in white institutions. This change has been most marked in the educationally élite or prestigious colleges, usually Protestant private colleges and universities. Responding no doubt to the pressure of militant students, private élite colleges have outdistanced all others in Negro attendance. Data in Table I on black freshmen granted admission to 15 élite colleges in the East show for 1970 that of 11,716 freshmen offered admission some 1,759 are Negro (or 10.4%).

Table I

Number of Negro Freshmen Offered Admission to Selected Elite Colleges

COLLEGE	*Black Freshmen*		*Freshmen Places*	
	1969	1970	1969	1970
Brown	140	—*	820	820
Columbia	125	158	700	725
Cornell	157	270	750	875
Dartmouth	130	120**	825	825
Harvard	109	114	1200	1200
Pennsylvania	230	270	1725	1800
Princeton	121	167	910	985
Yale	150	150	1265	1255
TOTAL	1162	1249	8195	8485
Barnard	83	105	468	475
Bryn Mawr	31	34	212	230
Mount Holyoke	62	76	562	500
Radcliffe	51	54	330	320
Smith	81	113	713	615
Vassar	43	43	470	616
Wellesley	105	85	523	475
TOTAL	456	510	3278	3231

* Brown declined to give its number of black freshmen for this table.

** This figure is still indefinite.

For specific colleges, 12% of freshmen offered admission at Yale in 1970 are black, 10% at Harvard, 16% at Princeton, 22% at Barnard, and 17% at Radcliffe College.

Blacks at white colleges contrast sharply in several respects with blacks at Negro colleges, as well as with white peers.

1 Data from the already-mentioned American Council on Education survey of college freshmen in 1968 show that Negroes at white colleges are more distinctly urban than students at Negro colleges: 40% of Negro male freshmen in white schools grew up in large cities, compared to only 19.5% of male freshmen entering Negro colleges, and only 2.3% of white male freshmen. And only 16.9% of male Negro freshmen at white colleges come from the South, compared to 58.5% of male freshmen in Negro colleges.

2 The educational background of parents of Negro freshmen in white colleges is also distinct from that of freshmen in Negro colleges: about 45% of all Negro freshmen (male and female) in white colleges have fathers who failed to complete high school, but 60% of freshmen in Negro colleges have fathers in this category; and only 38% of black freshmen at white colleges had mothers in this category, compared to 50% of freshmen in Negro colleges. Both groups of black freshmen compared unfavourably with white freshmen in this regard, however. Less than 25% of white freshmen have fathers who failed to finish high school, and less than a fifth have mothers in this category.

3 The income of parents of Negro freshmen at white colleges is also superior to that of freshmen at Negro colleges. 27.3% of black male freshmen in white colleges have parents within the middle-to-upper-middle income range of $8,000 to $20,000 and 31.2% of black females in white schools; but only one-fifth of freshmen in Negro colleges have parents in this range. Again, the incomes of white freshmen's parents are markedly superior to those of Negro freshmen in either black or white schools. Only 13% of white freshmen (male and female) have parents with incomes less than $6,000, compared to 49% of black male freshmen (46% female) in white colleges and 62.3% of freshmen in Negro colleges.

Thus, in summary it seems that in regard to both the education and income of parents, Negro students at white colleges are from better-off backgrounds than students at Negro colleges. The same is true, it seems, in the matter of academic aptitude: freshmen entering Negro colleges in 1966 had aptitude scores two standard-deviation-units below white students, whereas blacks entering white colleges scored between 0.3 (for males) and 0.7 (for females) standard-deviation-units below white freshmen. These differentials are, no doubt, a function of demographic and cultural attributes: for, as I have noted, nearly 40% of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

students in Negro colleges are from a farm or small town, compared to one-fifth of Negroes in white colleges who hail overwhelmingly from large cities or medium-sized ones.

The attributes distinguishing blacks in Negro and white colleges are, moreover, likely to become more marked in the future. For both within and outside the South, Negro students of better educational, income, and academic backgrounds are opting for entry to white rather than black colleges. Paradoxically, these same students with better-off backgrounds often exhibit greater alienation from and animosity toward white institutions. They often head the more xenophobic black nationalist tendencies among Negro students on white campuses.

Black Alienation

I CAN ONLY deal with the general status of militant black students on white campuses here. The detailed dynamics of black student militancy on white campuses will be delineated later through an account of the Black Studies movement, the most prominent militant expression of black students on white campuses (and, increasingly, at Negro colleges too).

Negro student militancy on white campuses sprang from the same sources as that on black campuses in the South. The impact of the SNCC in politically differentiating the Civil Rights movement was rather similar among Negro students both within and outside the South. Indeed, several key leaders of the SNCC were themselves formerly students on white campuses: Robert Moses, who actually conceived the idea of the SNCC, was educated at Hamilton College and Harvard University; and James Forman was a student at Roosevelt University (in Chicago) and Boston University. The ties between Negro students on white campuses and the SNCC were, moreover, formalised through the Northern Student Movement and through perpetual fund-raising and recruiting activities on white campuses by SNCC throughout the early and mid-1960s. Thus as SNCC went through a metamorphosis under the banner of "Black Power" and the leadership of Stokely Carmichael from 1966 onward, black students in white colleges were privy to this event.

Unlike students in Negro colleges, blacks in white colleges were nearer the urban vortex of the wider black nationalist politicisation of the Negro community. Their campuses experienced intimately the several stages of this nationalist politicisation of the urban Negro popular strata: commencing with the rise of Malcolm X (who frequently spoke at white colleges) and crystallising in the Black Panther Party, two leaders of which were at Merrit College (a white junior college in Oakland, California) when they conceived the party in 1966. In a sense, then, Negro students in white colleges, and particularly colleges in large cities and thus near the black ghetto, were in a special relationship to the general rise of black nationalist militancy.

THIS PRIVILEGED RELATIONSHIP to black nationalist militancy helped to distinguish the militant style of blacks in white colleges from students in Negro colleges. Though Negro students at both white and black colleges repudiated non-violence from 1967 onward, and have been equally quick to employ violence as a tactic, it is mainly blacks on white campuses who repudiate interracialism, both in language and action. Thus, black students on white campuses have acquired sundry outward trappings of rebellion and new Negro identity: African or "Afro" hairstyles, African-type dress, African names, black students associations, nationalistic magazines (*e.g.*, SOULBOOK, at San Francisco State College; THE BLACK STUDENT, Dartmouth; and the HARVARD JOURNAL OF NEGRO AFFAIRS), black studies (the most prominent manifestation of the new identity) violent rhetoric, and not infrequently instruments of force which have much symbolic potency to the Negro students' effort at self-redefinition outside white influences.

All of these forms of "acting-out", aggressively exhibiting the new black militancy are less prevalent in Negro colleges, denoting thereby a less politically orientated black student militancy in the Negro colleges. In pursuit of the goals associated with the exhibitionistic forms of Negro identity among black students in white colleges, these students have politicised, willy-nilly, virtually all facets of their life (with, not infrequently, psychologically maddening consequences). This highly politicised mode of Negro student militancy on white campuses has been particularly marked among middle-class Negro students. Apart from the catharsis derived from exhibiting before whites a behaviour pattern heretofore *verboten* in black-white relations—a factor of no small import in sustaining the militant

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

style among middle-class Negroes[2]—Negro students of middle-class background entered the black nationalist era with profound feelings of racial alienation.[3] The sense of guilt that this produces is, in large part, expiated through the militant and extensive politicisation of Negro students on white campuses. In Negro colleges the degree of racial alienation is much less (due in part to the lower family educational and income background of students in Negro colleges) and, thus, there is much less need to expiate guilt through total politicisation of student behaviour in Negro colleges.

The more extensive politicisation of Negro students in white colleges has been characterised by a highly sensitive reaction of Negro students to all policies of white college administrations. Virtually no facet of college governance—from the source of purchased nails and boards to the investment of the endowment, not to mention faculty and other hiring—escapes scrutiny. The upshot of this pattern of black student militancy has been a tendency to politicise the American college to an unprecedented degree.

(The concluding part of this article will be published next month.)

[2] On *verboten* behaviour in traditional black-white relations, see Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (1944), pp. 720-735. On the catharsis that Negroes derive from assertive behaviour towards whites, see Richard Wright, *Native Son* (1940).

[3] See Harold R. Isaacs, *The New World of Negro Americans* (1963).

"Black English"

New York City

THE NAACP *today denounced the teaching of "Black English" to Negro students in various Black Studies college courses.*

The denunciation came in the current issue of The Crisis, *official NAACP periodical, in an editorial called "Black Nonsense." It accused some educators of educationally crippling Negro students by formally urging them to use such vernacular expressions as "he be tired" instead of proper English: "he became tired."*

The Crisis *centred its fire on a "Black English" course at Brooklyn College where 50 Negro students are being taught, under a $65,000 Ford Foundation grant, to regard the vernacular as their "native" language.*

The editorial charged that sponsors of such programs, at Brooklyn College and elsewhere, are "trying to transform a vernacular which is more regional than racial, more Southern than Negro, into a full-fledged distinct language which the college offers as a course.

"This language is merely the English of the under-educated, with provincial variances in accent and structure from locale to locale throughout the English-speaking world. One might as well call the cockney of the London East Enders or the speech patterns of the Appalachian whites separate languages."

Declaring that "the so-called Black English is basically the same slovenly English spoken by the South's undereducated poor white population," The Crisis *called for a nationwide protest from Negro parents, saying:*

"What our children need, and other disadvantaged American children as well—Indian, Spanish-speaking, Asian, Appalachian and immigrant Caucasians—is training in basic English which today is as near an international language as any in the world. To attempt to lock them into a provincial patois is to limit their opportunities in the world at large."

IN HIS *syndicated column, the Negro leader Roy Willkins wrote: "Some old-fashioned black people may see this language bit, as, well, 'racist'. They may feel it is a fancy way of saying their children are inferior and, perhaps, incapable of learning even the languages of the American mainstream.*

"Let them be reassured by the Center of Applied Linguistics in Washington D.C., which is pushing 'bidialectalism' or 'biloquialism' . . . An Illinois linguist has even attacked social mobility as an 'improper motivation'. . . . If a parent suspects that all this is nonsense, he is simply not 'with it'. If it appears that a black youngster born in 1955, with parents born in 1931, has a strong throwback to pre-1619 African speech habits, the appearance—say the pedagogues—is correct! . . ."

His ironic conclusion was: "Don't look now, but it may not be long before the language of the ghetto becomes the first language and that of Shakespeare, Disraeli, Winston Churchill and Henry James the second language in skin-color-happy America. . . ."

NEW YORK POST

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AUTHORS & CRITICS

Disestablishing Science?

DR BRONOWSKI is an old hand at scientific administration and a man who has given much thought to the relations between science and government. His views must therefore be taken very seriously. In spite of the weight and persuasiveness of his moral argument I do not feel that his proposals are very relevant to Britain at present. (In this country the Defence Departments are not great patrons of science generally.)

Most people don't realise the pervasiveness of governmental support for scientific research of all kinds in this country. So much of it is subsidised through the University Grants Committee and the Research Councils (different teats, same cow) that to abjure the creeping patronage of government would bring most research to a standstill. Consider the honest paleontologist poring over his fossils in a back room in a zoological department: he is no less a hireling of government than the man engaged on research into offensive weaponry. He is indeed even more dependent on government for patronage. In my fairly lengthy experience as Professor and Chairman of Zoology Departments in this country I found it a matter of the greatest difficulty to get money to support my paleontologists. No Research Council cherishes them and the great private research foundations, in their natural anxiety to be fully up-to-date, have little thought and no money to spare for the Mesozoic. Moreover, the paleontologist himself cannot very easily get a scientific job elsewhere: his knowledge and skills are too specialised. This all means that he and his research have to be subsidised by University—that is, by governmental—funds.

The system of allocation of funds that Bronowski recommends, with the interposition of committees of scientists between the government and its beneficiaries, is already in operation in this country in the form of our Research Councils. These are essentially committees of scientists plus a few statutory laymen which weigh up the rival merits of different applications for funds and allocate subsidies accordingly. The Research Council system represents an important and administrative innovation for which in its present form we are largely indebted to Dr Christopher Addison, Minister of Reconstruction after the last War. Interestingly enough, he was most insistent that the Council he was most deeply concerned with (the Medical Research Council) should *not* come under the thumb of an Executive Department like the Ministry of Health even though he himself became its first Minister. His reasons for insisting on the Council's independence were essentially those now given by Bronowski.

I MUST SAY, with a slight feeling of disloyalty, that I do not share Bronowski's faith in the judgment and integrity of committees of scientists. In my experience they are just as easily swayed as are committees of laymen by considerations of fashion and a desire to avoid making mistakes by backing only those horses that are clearly seen to be in the final straight. In spite of having enjoyed the best scientific advice, all Research Councils have skeletons in their cupboards, ghastly boobs which by general agreement are never referred to even *in camera*. Lay committees have at least this to be said for them: that they have the genuine and well-founded humility that grows out of a vivid awareness of their own fallibility. It is this kind of humility that committees of scientists too often lack. Our Council system has attracted the interest of American administrators who are studying it with an eye perhaps to introducing a similar principle into the U.S.A. It is very satisfactory that this should be so because it will help to repay our debt to America for the very valuable lead they have given us in shaping the academic structure of our new universities. This is all as it should be.

America has a far longer experience of *general* university education than we have. The great wave of university building that happened

SIR PETER MEDAWAR *was awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1960. He was until recently the Director of the National Institute for Medical Research. Among his recent contributions to* ENCOUNTER *are "Anglo-Saxon Attitudes" (August 1965), "Science & the Sanctity of Life" (December 1966), "Science and Literature" (January 1969), and "Misunderstanding Psychoanalysis" (November 1969).*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

here in 1890-1910 happened in America about 100 years ago. We, on the other hand, have had longer experience of the support of scientific research generally by governmental funds. We have, therefore, a good deal to teach each other.

I do, however, agree that Disestablishment is a fine long-term ambition but am not yet convinced that it can be achieved without serious damage to Science. This misgiving is the basis of the very mild reservations I have explained above.

P. B. Medawar

Research & Politics

THE "PROJECT CONTRACT OR GRANT" was no accident. It was a stratagem to effect very much the same disestablishment of science for which J. Bronowski prays today. A generation ago, the avowed purpose was to keep science unsullied by "politics." So, Bronowski proposes "to bring about the separation, as complete as possible, between Science and Government . . . ." By now it should be clear that such purpose is not only illusory, as a practical matter, but also wrong on the ethical terms Bronowski so cleanly defines.

At the end of World War II, Vannevar Bush and his colleagues asked the nation for a National Science Foundation to be supported outside of the U.S. Government by public funds. A bill enacting this boon was vetoed by Harry S. Truman with the stricture: "The proposed National Science Foundation would be divorced from control by the people to an extent that implies a distinct lack of faith in democratic processes." Truman would have the same to say—and I think rightly so—of Bronowski's "single national grant . . . to be allocated by the scientific community itself."

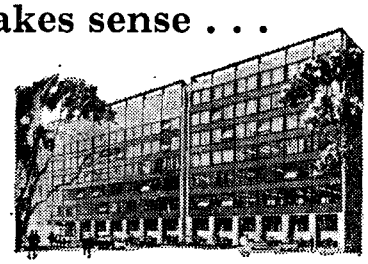
Failing the Foundation as originally proposed, American scientists held out basins, hats, and some less mentionable receptacles to catch the mounting flow of project money from "mission-oriented" agencies, two-thirds of it at all times from military and para-military agencies. They had (as Alvin Weinberg said) not one National Science Foundation, but seven or eight. Science thus escaped vulgar politics but was soiled and suborned in all the ways Bronowski describes. Moreover, after a cumulative $15 billion of Federal expenditure for university science, neither science nor the university have established any claim in their own right on the U.S. public treasury.

THE MORAL OF THIS EXPERIENCE is unmistakable. Science cannot be separated from government; science must embrace politics. Scientists and all who share their values must assert the claims of science for public support as the enterprise that at once makes possible and worthy the continued attempt at civilisation. Ultimately the intellectual integrity of science must stand against the power of the national state; the "two moralities" of which Bronowski speaks must be brought into open contention, or science and civilisation must perish in the clash of mindless states so terribly capacitated by science.

One further comment: the principal governmental granting agency should be not a Science Foundation—with the special interest and a-political attitude that term implies—but a

GERARD PIEL *is editor and publisher of the monthly journal "Scientific American", and author of "Science in the Cause of Man" (1961).*

It makes sense . . .



The Main Laboratories at Lincoln's Inn Fields

to support the Imperial Cancer Research Fund

● Because the Fund is playing a role of major international importance and last year applied £2·9 million to further its research.
● Costs of administration and appeals are kept as low as 4½p in the pound.
● Our hopes for the future are based on the solid foundation of important achievements which have received world-wide recognition.
● The Fund depends entirely on public support.

It makes sense to support I.C.R.F. now with a Legacy, Covenant, Annual Subscription or Donation—for everyone's sake.

Donations may be sent to: Hon. Treasurer, I.C.R.F. (Dept. E), P.O. Box 123, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PX

Patron: H.M. THE QUEEN
President: The Honourable Angus Ogilvy

IMPERIAL CANCER RESEARCH FUND

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Council of the Arts, Humanities, and Sciences. At the receiving end, correspondingly, the grantee should be not the scientist or scholar, but the University as the community of scientists and scholars. With the autonomy of universities restored, some project funding would be in order. Solid-state physics was not a fashionable subject until Bell Labs in the U.S. and Abram Joffe's laboratory in the U.S.S.R. looked there for answers to some mundane questions.

Gerard Piel

Towards a New Dictatorship?

DR BRONOWSKI'S ARGUMENT calling for "The Disestablishment of Science" is of exceptional interest. If we were to follow his advice we should be surrendering many of our essential political liberties to a community of scientists, who would then be practising a new "dictatorship of the proletariat".

At first glance Bronowski's thesis looks very liberal. He speaks so eloquently for scientists who feel trapped working for governments, and especially the military industrial complex. He argues for the exercise of conscience, along with the founders of the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, who want to express it through developing and sustaining a code of conduct based on the assumption of personal responsibility. He properly warns that "nationalism has now distorted the use of science", and argues convincingly that "grants for non-military research should not come from quasi-military sources." So far so good.

We find him asserting that

> a pervasive moral distortion, a readiness to use any means for its own ends, warps the machinery of modern government . . . a great apparatus of evasion is constructed, a sort of plastic language without content, in which a pack of deliberate half-truths (and less) goes by the euphemism of "the credibility gap." The scientist who goes into this jungle of twentieth-century government, anywhere in the world, puts himself at a double disadvantage.

It is at this moment that Bronowski betrays himself. For in attacking the decisions that modern societies make, he draws little distinction between democratic and authoritarian governments and assumes, without any sort of proof, that this defect in policy and machinery cannot be corrected within a democratic system. "Government is an apparatus which exercises power and which is bent on retaining it." And then: "This cast of mind and of method is flatly at odds with the integrity of science."

By contrast with politicians and their electors who, working together, are incapable of "integrity", we are told that

> science is no longer a profession like any other. For now the hidden spring of power is knowledge. . . . Therefore those whose profession is knowledge and discovery hold a place which is crucial in our societies: crucial in importance and hence in responsibility. . . . In my view, there is now a duty laid on scientists to set an incorruptible standard of public morality.

Bronowski calls for a fundamental political change under which "the choice of priorities in research should not be left in the hands of governments", and the money for research should be pooled and its division should become "the business of scientists themselves." Having thus claimed for himself and his scientific colleagues the central decision-making functions of the community, he graciously concedes that this communal responsibility "must be shared with the community by a form of representation which will have to be devised for the purpose." Thus the new scientist-statesman graciously admits that a purely advisory assembly may be necessary from time to time, just as medieval kings received petitions from Parliament, before issuing their proclamations.

THE ARROGANCE UNDERLYING this argument is quite breathtaking. But more than that, its thinking is primitive, naive, and unscientific. There is no analysis of how the problems of power have been or might be handled, nor any serious attempt to differentiate between alternative systems of government, all of which are blankly dismissed. There is no recognition that the users of science may want and be entitled to set the targets for themselves so that their most pressing problems can receive priority and the resources to make it possible. The old and correct argument for academic freedom (which allows intellectuals to pursue truth) is extended to give to scientific intellectuals the power to take the key decisions that will shape society.

If Bronowski's argument were taken seriously, and we were to try to set up a system of

ANTHONY WEDGWOOD BENN *was Minister of Science and Technology in Harold Wilson's Labour government.*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

government which put scientists in power leaving the rest of us as petitioners, would there be any provision for changing our scientists in elections, or would they just listen politely and then deliver their binding judgments?

Fortunately, though Bronowski may speak for a few scientists, he certainly does not speak for the majority, who are much more modest in their claims about their own wisdom. They do not want to by-pass the really difficult problem of persuading a society to change its course, voluntarily, instead of offering them a Utopia to be won by surrendering their liberties to a new ruling class.

Science has not just created a new intellectual élite. It has also educated everybody, and made us all so interdependent that we cannot advance save by establishing a new consensus. This is the central political problem. It isn't just scientists who are swept along by the juggernaut of modern society. We are all locked in it, and have got to find a way of getting it under control. It is very sad for admirers of Dr Bronowski, a humane and liberal philosopher of science who did so much to alert laymen to its importance, to find him emerging as a new authoritarian élitist.

THE DANGERS HE WARNS US AGAINST are real. But there are no short cuts. Unless we share power, we can never control it. Unless we can mobilise the ability and common sense of ordinary people there cannot be any effective check on ambitious politicians—or even brilliant scientists with political ambitions, and a distaste for democracy.

Anthony Wedgwood Benn

"Copping Out"

IDENTIFICATION OF MEN with separate, competing, and often warring groups (which we now call "nations") is not the result of evil desires and foolish policies of certain individuals or classes—of power-hungry kings, blood-thirsty militarists, selfish capitalists, or fanatical followers of extremist creeds. It has been, rather, the result of evolutionary selection—which proved advantageous for the human animals to hunt in packs, and to collect food in organised groups. Evolution thus selected, for preferential survival and propagation, societies able to secure the most effective cooperation of its members in this type of collective activities—including willingness to die (and readiness to kill) on their behalf.

EUGENE RABINOWITCH, *physical chemist and author of "Photosynthesis", 3 vols. (1945-1956), and "Minutes to Midnight" (1950), is the founding editor and publisher of "The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists."*

The reason why this type of behaviour proved most successful was that humans, like many other animals, lived in a habitat of scarcity, where survival of a family or group depended on its securing adequate resources and protecting them from competition. Well organised militant societies proved better able to do this than lone individuals, or looser groups.

This is the evolutionary origin of patriotism, nationalism, imperialism—of all forms of exclusive identification of individuals with a closed group or society. Dedication to such a society had been the basis on which all past civilisations have developed, and on which their achievements—arts, technologies, religions, and sciences—had grown.

To survive, mankind now must outgrow this historical pattern of separate national existences, and make a fresh beginning. This we must recognise. But it would be useless to pretend that militant identification of individual citizens with their societies had always been only an aberration, an evil, a deviation from the straight path of human progress! It has been nothing of the kind. It has been an essential part of the mechanism mankind evolved in its economic and cultural advancement. It is only recently that this motor has begun to sputter, and to threaten an explosion which may blow up all of us. It must be now replaced by a mechanism more likely to function successfully in the present state of mankind. It is not that scientists should dissociate themselves from the evil ways their nations still follow under the influence of evil individuals, or selfish classes! This would be useless even if it were possible—which it is not. Mankind as a whole must choose a new path, and all that scientists can do is to play an active role in defining it. Evolution has selected, throughout history, militant, nation-centred behaviour as key to success. All of us are the inheritors of this evolutionary burden, and none of us can simply disclaim it!

"Disestablishment" of science, as advocated by Dr Bronowski, is as impossible as has been, in the past, the disestablishment of religion. When the *"Enola Gay"* carried the first atom bomb to Hiroshima, its flight was preceded by a religious service, invoking God's blessing on the enterprise (which brought death to 100,000

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

innocent men, women, and children). Science and religion—the former not yet "established", and the latter supposedly long ago "disestablished" in America—joined hands in this apotheosis of militant nationalism. Science cannot reclaim the luxury of an extra-national existence, which it had enjoyed for a while when it was unimportant. Scientists cannot quit the world of international competition and power contests, and say: "We don't want to play in this game any more." It is not so simple and easy. The existential basis of the whole of mankind must be changed, not that of science alone.

The radical change, which the human condition has undergone in our time, is twofold. In the first place, the destructive capacities which modern science has placed in the hands of nations are too great to be used in the pursuit of any national aims. In the second place, sources of national wealth have ceased to be limited (as fertile fields, hunting and fishing grounds, or fuel and ore deposits, had been throughout history). Science and technology are showing us ways to create wealth from widely available raw materials—common minerals, air, sea water—with the aid of potentially unlimited sources of energy (fusion power, solar energy). Thus we enter an era in which fighting between closed societies for limited resources of energy and materials will be not only prohibitively destructive, but also fundamentally unnecessary.

Bronowski suggests that scientific communities should opt out of their national societies, while leaving the latter to pursue their traditional power politics. This seems too superficial and self-centred for me. Or is it meant to be a clever strategy, like Szilard's international conspiracy of scientists hiding behind a tankful of dolphins as pretended source of superhuman wisdom? Bronowski seems to me a follower of the King of Saxony, who resigned his throne in 1918 with the words *"Macht euch euren Dreck alleene* (Wallow in your muck by yourself)", rather than a follower of Szilard.

THE ANSWER to the human predicament of the nuclear age lies not in intellectual communities "copping out" of the traditional framework of national existence, but in all who are aware of the source of this predicament joining hands in a political and educational effort. Mankind must make a new departure, based on subordination of national interests to universal interests of mankind. It must do so not out of "unrealistic" idealism, but out of realistic understanding that in the age of space travel and thermonuclear weapons, the old adage "united we stand, divided we fall" applies to the whole of mankind, and not to any of its separate parts. There is no salvation in isolation—neither for any nation, nor for any group within a nation.

Eugene Rabinowitch

Just So

A dull man all his life
he leapt to fame at Chalk Farm
on an ordinary March morning
in a clerk-grey suit. Impulsive,
sick of the scrapings, of his
two drab semis (wife and home),
he threw himself, just so, without ado
beneath the eight thirty-two.

Your Attention Please, Attention Please
official voices brayed, proclaiming
the news to the waiting queues
at Colindale and Brent. And for thirty
time-is-money minutes, while passengers
cursed, were "subject to some delay",
while long trains stirred, he
was as good as there, in lights,
with Bank, with Waterloo,
a neon hero for a moment or two.

Jeremy Robson

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Khrushchev Expertise

I AM AFRAID both Mr J. L. B. Phillips (July) and Mr Tibor Szamuely (August) failed to grasp the point of my article, which was (if I may quote myself) to offer not "yet another answer to the Khrushchev 'whodunit,' but rather an inquiry into the validity of some of the answers presented by the experts thus far." And so I cheerfully plead guilty to their charges that my "hypothesis" was no more convincing than the theories I had set out to criticise.

In point of fact, until the Kremlin archives (or perhaps even the *Time-Life* files) are opened, the Khrushchev "memoirs" are destined to remain one of those perennial (and by now rather tedious) Sovietological mysteries, and it simply won't do to claim (as did Mr Szamuely in his *Spectator* article) that one has *the* answer to it. In addition, I wish Mr Szamuely would shake off his old political habits and stop embellishing the truth, levelling extravagant accusations and engaging in paltry *ad hominems* in order to defend a fixed position. He happens to be right on two points: first, on "misplacing of Khrushchev's own birthplace" (a phrase added by ENCOUNTER based on what *The Times* had added to The Khrushchev text); and on the biography of General Vlasov (which was not a book, but an unpublished manuscript circulated by Vlasov's supporters at a conference held in Frankfurt in the late 1940s; I have this on excellent, though regrettably not divulgeable, authority). All other charges of "gross factual errors," "substantial liberties with the texts," repeated contradictions, etc., are pure balderdash. For example, some time ago Mr Szamuely told me personally how "delighted" he was with my article on Victor Louis in *Problems of Communism*. Now that I, too, have become a critic—which I suppose, using his ideological vocabulary, makes me an "enemy"— of his it suits him to charge me with lack of consistency (or worse).

As for the matter of Mr Heren's remarks on the role of the KGB, it should be clear to anyone who has read the two articles (*The Times*, Nov. 17 and 20, 1970) that Mr Heren was engaged in *speculations*, however tenuous or naïve. Mr Szamuely, however, disingenuously congratulates the latter for having "had the courage to admit that *The Times* was publishing material sold by the KGB in the interests of the KGB." Mr Heren said (Nov. 17) that "there was reason to believe that [the Khrushchev manuscript] is in the possession of the KGB." In his *Spectator* piece, Mr Szamuely quoted this sentence *without* the words "there is reason to believe." He now cites the whole passage, and adds sententiously: "Exactly as I had quoted." In his second article, Mr Heren speculated on the "peculiar" nature of the Soviet secret police, which is prone, in his words, to "combining simple brutality with most tortuous subtlety." This, to Mr Szamuely, was nothing less than an "extraordinary paean of praise to the Soviet secret police." Yet he accuses *me* of "slipshod methods." Good grief.

ABRAHAM BRUMBERG

London

"An American Expression"?

WITH ALL RESPECT, but with some amusement, may I suggest that any Englishman who writes "to use an American expression" would do well to pause, and then *not* use what he imagines to be an American expression?

In your June issue (p. 46) John Weightman writes: " . . . remains as impassive as—to use an American expression—a drug-store Indian."

There is, of course, no such thing as a drug-store Indian. The reference Mr Weightman intends is to a *cigar-store* Indian. Once there was such a thing as a drug-store *cowboy*, but it would take too long, and probably be futile anyway, to explain these distinctions. They are the sort of thing that, for instance, make Clive Barnes look ludicrous so often in the *New York Times*. (Poor Mr Barnes, if he lives to be ninety, will go to his grave unable to distinguish between Norman Rockwell and Ring Lardner.)

Lest I seem to be giving myself superior American airs, I hasten to concede that American writers should be at least as wary of writing "—to use an English expression—."

RICHARD HANSER

Larchmont, N.Y

Before Fiedler

"R" IS TIMELY in pointing out [July] the weirdness of Dr Leslie Fiedler's attitude in writing and lecturing as though he had re-invented the Dadaism of Zurich and Paris of 1919-20. Listening to a lecture of Dr Fiedler's not long ago, I had a strong impression that when asking us to reject Western art and other values wholesale, he was genuinely unaware of the whole army of his predecessors in this suggestion, especially his fascist and Communist predecessors. Yet how strikingly similar Dr Fiedler's expression is to theirs. The passage from Dr Fiedler's contribution to *Playboy* ran as follows:

> The kind of criticism the age demands is death-of-art criticism, which is most naturally practised by those who have come of age since the death of the new poetry and the new criticism. It seems evident that writers not blessed to be under 30 (or 35 or whatever the critical age is these days) must be reborn in order to seem relevant to the moment and to those who inhabit it most naturally: the young. But one hasn't even the hope of being reborn unless he knows first that he is dead.

Compare this with D. H. Lawrence, writing in 1915, a generation before Dr Fiedler's new élite —the young—were born:

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"We must all submit to be helpless and obliterated . . . cast away into nothingness. There is something will rise out of it, something new that now is not. This which we are must cease to be, that we may come to pass into another being . . . only drift and let go, let go entirely."

Or, to go to direct fascist and Communist precursors, what of Marinetti, starting out with his Futurists in 1909 on the road that was to lead him to Mussolini:

"Literature has hitherto celebrated contemplative immobilisme, rapture and slumber. . . . It is our intention to destroy museums, libraries, academies of every type . . . for we, young and strong Futurists, wish to have nothing to do with the past."

And didn't Spengler say in 1918, as if predicting Dr Fiedler's "death-of-art criticism" that

"We are a civilised, not Gothic or Rococo people. . . . Of great painting or great music there can no longer be, for Western people, any question. Their architectural possibilities have been exhausted these hundred years."

So what is left except Caesarism? Concerning the western intellectual's attempt at "rebirth" *via* Communism, Mr Alastair Hamilton to whom I am indebted for these two quotations has reminded us in his recent book (*The Appeal of Fascism*, published by Blond) how in 1932, André Gide informed Dorothy Bussy

"That he had played all his life with false chips; that nothing for which he had lived had any value any more; that *art, free thought,* even truth would no longer count, *should* no longer count in the new world which Communism was opening for us, that we should side with the men who made Socrates drink hemlock, that art and the spiritual values of *Andromaque* were out of date and no longer concerned us."

Gide soon found out the black farce of expecting "rebirth" in the Stalinist paradise. Not so, Louis Aragon, who in the Parisian Manifesto of Dadaism in the magazine *Littérature* had written in 1920 with a directness Dr Fiedler might envy that the aim was simply

"No more painters, no more writers, no more musicians, no more sculptors, no more religions, no more republicans, no more royalists, no more imperialists, no more socialists, no more bolsheviks, no more politicians, no more democrats, no more bourgeois, no more armies, no more police, no more fatherlands, etc., etc., etc."

One might have thought that Dr Fiedler's young men from the campus were around when Louis Aragon wrote this. We know where this wild rejection of the past led Aragon: to full support of the Stalinist state for many, far too many years. *Mutatis mutandis,* one wonders to what positions the talented Dr Fiedler will have been led, when no longer able in any seemly way to march under the banner of youth and to ask others to realise that they are dead. After all, the time must come.

T. R. FYVEL

London

AUTHORS

Andrew Shonfield is at present Director of the Social Science Research Council. He will shortly be taking up a new appointment as Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House). Among his contributions to ENCOUNTER are "The Pragmatic Illusion" (June 1967), "The Politics of Forster's India" (January 1968), and "Thinking about the Future" (February 1969). His books include *Attack on World Poverty* (1960), and *Modern Capitalism* (1965). . . .

Leopold Labedz is the editor of the London quarterly review, *Survey*. He was educated at the London School of Economics and the University of Bologna, and is a recognised authority on Soviet and international affairs. His book on *Solzhenitsyn: A Documentary Record* was recently published by Allen Lane The Penguin Press. . . .

Norman Levine's "My Karsh Picture" will be included in his collection of short stories, *I don't Want to Know Anyone Too Well*, which Macmillan will publish in October. Born in Ottawa in 1924, he has a growing following in Germany where his translator is Heinrich Böll. Böll is also translating his recent novel, *From a Seaside Town*. . . .

John Holloway is a literary critic, poet, and Reader in Modern English at Cambridge. He has edited *Little Dorrit* for Penguin Books and is a contributor to *Dickens 1970* (Chapman & Hall). His book *The Victorian Sage* has recently been reprinted by Archon Books, and in paperback by W. W. Norton, and *New Poems* will be coming from Scribner's this summer. Recent contributions to ENCOUNTER include "The Death and Resurrection of the Folk Tale" (October 1970), "Thoughts after Dover Wilson" (April 1970), "Science & Literature" (July 1969), and "The Waste Land" (August 1968). . . .

Marin Sorescu (as his translator, Constantine Roman, writes) was born in 1936, and (like Brancusi) comes from a village in Oltenia in south-western Rumania. He is the author of plays and literary criticism and his volumes of poetry include: *Alone Among Poets* (1964), *Death of the Clock* (1966), *Poems* (1967), *Don Quixote's Youth* (1968), the source of the translations in ENCOUNTER. . . .

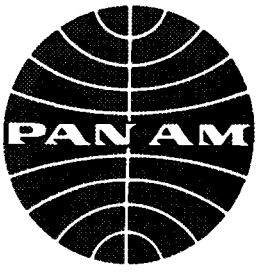
ENCOUNTER Magazine is published in London by Encounter Ltd. (59 St. Martin's Lane, London W.C.2).

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It's all a question of experience.
You've either got it or you haven't.
And Pan Am have got it.

We've just carried
our 2,000,000th 747 passenger!



PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED